

**MAYOR'S OFFICE OF OPERATIONS TESTIMONY TO THE
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS, STATE & FEDERAL
LEGISLATION**

June 16, 2025

Good morning, Chair Restler and members of the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation. My name is Dan Steinberg and I serve as Director of the Mayor's Office of Operations and as Chair of the Report and Advisory Board Review Commission (RABRC). Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony related to RABRC's December 2024 waiver determination recommending the waiver or partial waiver of six reports.

RABRC was created in 2010 following a referendum on a Charter Review Commission proposal and remains an essential component of the Mayor's Office of Operations. The Commission, chaired by the Director of the Mayor's Office of Operations, is comprised of representatives from the City Council, Law Department, Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications (now the Office of Technology and Innovation), and Office of Management and Budget.

Per the New York City Charter (Charter), RABRC is tasked with reviewing and assessing the continued usefulness of reporting requirements and advisory boards established by the City Charter, Administrative Code, and unconsolidated provisions of local law. The commission aims to identify and eliminate outdated, duplicative, and unnecessary reporting and advisory board requirements, with the goal of streamlining government. The Charter outlines four primary criteria for RABRC to consider when weighting whether to grant a waiver: utility, redundancy, relevance, and overall benefit.

The recent RABRC cycle began in June 2023 with a solicitation to agencies for reports and advisory boards to consider. By September 1, agencies had submitted 28 waiver requests. Operations staff compiled information about the reports and submitted 13 candidates for commissioners to review. After receiving input from RABRC commissioners, Operations staff recommended the commission consider six reports at the next hearing. In advance of the hearing and in accordance with the stipulations set forth in section 1113 of the Charter, Operations staff sought testimony from interest groups who may be affected by the waiver of a particular report. Operations received testimony in favor of two waivers and received no testimony in opposition to any waiver. The Commission voted unanimously on December 13, 2024, to grant waivers or partial waivers to all six reports.

Lastly, thank you, RABRC Commissioners, for your collaboration and partnership. We look forward to continued efforts to streamline government by removing redundant and unnecessary reporting requirements.

Introduction

Good morning, Chair Restler, and members of the City Council's Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation.

Background on RES

As you are aware, DCAS is responsible for identifying and managing office space for city agencies, including both City-owned and leased properties. In addition to work we do to assist city agencies, DCAS is mandated by law to support community boards with securing office space within the districts they serve. Typically, community board spaces are capped at 1,500 square feet, and are equipped to meet the day-to-day operational needs of the community board including assisting their constituents.

Process

For DCAS, the process to select office space for community boards begins when OMB approves a new need for space. Once the approval from OMB is received, DCAS assesses City-owned and leased properties within the City's portfolio to determine whether there is an existing property that meets the community board's needs within their district. If there is no existing City property that best meets the need approved by OMB, we work with our tenant representatives to assist in searching for space that may be a good fit for the best price possible.

Once we receive options from our tenant representatives, DCAS reviews the proposals to identify the best possible option before beginning negotiations. Once DCAS has agreed on the terms of a lease with a prospective landlord, the respective DCAS teams draft the lease; subsequently going through OMB and Law Department review and approval. In addition to those internal processes, every City lease goes through a public review process, as required by the NYC Charter. It is only after these steps have been taken that the transaction can be finalized for mayoral approval, and finally, lease execution by DCAS.

Legislation

This bill would establish the Office of Community Board Support within DCAS. Based on the current draft of the bill, this office would be required to assist community boards in finding accessible public meeting spaces and permanent office spaces. The office would also be required to conduct regular assessments regarding the physical needs of community board offices and help with any needed repairs or upgrades to the offices.

DCAS already works to meet the needs of community boards in securing office space and this bill would impose unnecessary and burdensome requirements on DCAS. To that end, we do not support the current version of this bill. We are especially concerned with the proposal to task our agency with identifying regular meeting spaces for community

boards. The number and frequency of meetings that take place throughout the course of the year would create an undue burden on our agency's resources. Furthermore, community boards are far better positioned than DCAS to identify appropriate and accessible meeting spaces within their own districts, given their knowledge of the communities they serve. Moreover, we do not support the proposed requirement that DCAS conduct regular physical needs assessments of these spaces. Agencies, including community boards, are the ones who occupy these spaces and are in the best position to flag any issues with the landlord. If the landlord fails to address their concerns, DCAS can, and does, advocate on their behalf.

Conclusion:

While we are not supportive of this particular proposed legislation, we remain ready as ever to work closely with the Council to explore feasible and cost-effective solutions that best serve all New Yorkers.

Thank you for your time and attention. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

**OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION TESTIMONY BEFORE THE NEW
YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS, STATE
& FEDERAL LEGISLATION**

Oversight - Community Boards Resources and Support.

JUNE 16, 2025

Good morning, Chair Restler and members of the City Council Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation. Please accept this testimony on behalf of Jeffrey Stevenson, Acting Deputy Commissioner of Infrastructure Management under the Office of Technology and Innovation (OTI). Thank you for the opportunity to provide the Committee information about OTI's support of Community Boards.

For those unfamiliar with OTI, it was created by Executive Order 3 in January 2022, combining the City's existing technology offices under the leadership of Chief Technology Officer Matthew Fraser. This includes the legacy offices overseeing data analytics, privacy, 311, cybersecurity, and the city's backend technology.

I oversee the Infrastructure Management division at OTI, which builds, supports, and maintains the technology infrastructure that keeps our city running and serving the public. The technology services my team oversees supports all mayoral agencies as well as many other city government entities. The infrastructure we maintain includes, but is not limited to:

- CityNet, the city's private large-scale Wide Area Network (WAN) backbone that provides a robust and secure network to access the internet, cloud services and citywide applications through a secure channel for the delivery of data, voice, and video services;
- OTI's Data Centers, featuring proactive system management as well as automated patching and monitoring. Our 'Always On' infrastructure guarantees continuous operation of mission-critical applications supporting resilience, efficiency, and security.

Although a large portion of our work is to maintain shared technology infrastructure, we understand that many non-mayoral entities have unique technology needs, depending on several factors, including their mission, physical location, budget, and capacity for in-house technology staff. Most of the agencies and offices we serve employ a Chief Information Officer (CIO) tasked with making decisions about technology services for their own organization.

In the case of Community Boards, these offices are often staffed by a small handful of employees who take on multiple roles and responsibilities. Typically, a Community Board does not employ a full-time CIO. There are 59 distinct community boards, each with different technology needs. In recognition of this, OTI has provided a unique support model for Community Boards. For many years, OTI has dedicated an employee whose full-time job is to serve Community Boards' technology needs. This individual's main role is to provide desktop support to assist in troubleshooting localized issues. He is also able to properly route requests outside of his direct purview, including telecom billing, goods and services contracts, e-mail provisioning, and nyc.gov website maintenance. All Community Boards may also submit tickets through the Citywide Service Desk, as other agencies and entities do, so their requests may be tracked and resolved in a timely manner.

In the past year, we spearheaded a coordinated effort to migrate all Community Boards' physical data storage to OneDrive and SharePoint to provide greater resiliency, security, and availability of files. To date, we have migrated nearly all the Community Boards and will continue to engage the remaining offices.

We appreciate the Committee's interest in our role. Please contact OTI's Public Information team with any questions you may have.

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**NYC Council Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation
Hearing on Community Boards Resources and Support**

June 16, 2025

Joint Testimony submitted by:
Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson
Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso
Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine
Queens Borough President Donovan Richards
Staten Island Borough President Vito Fossella

Thank you, Chair Restler, and members of the City Council Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation for holding this hearing and for the opportunity to testify on bills related to supporting community boards.

Community boards are a vital forum for residents to engage with local issues and contribute to decisions that impact their neighborhoods. As Borough Presidents, we take great pride in our Charter-mandated responsibility to appoint community board members and support boards with training and technical assistance, and we take that responsibility very seriously. As largely volunteer bodies, community boards and their members exemplify public service. Each board has its own individual style and strengths, reflecting the unique culture of their boroughs and neighborhoods. And each board is its own independent government entity, creating its own committees, agendas, norms, and bylaws.

Each of our offices have invested significant effort into making sure community boards are equipped with the tools and support they need to succeed. Our dedicated staff in each borough have neighborhood-specific expertise and partner and collaborate with community boards on the issues relevant to their members and constituents. Our offices have continuously strengthened, expanded, and diversified the trainings available to community board members, spanning parliamentary procedure, equal employment and opportunity, and more. We also work rigorously to ensure that new members have trainings and information they need when onboarded. We take these steps not because we are required to, but because we know that our boroughs and neighborhoods thrive when our community boards are able to fully engage with their neighbors and with the issues most important to them.

The bills on today's agenda offer some potential ways to expand the support available to community boards, an idea we fully support. At the same time, we believe that it is crucial to avoid creating unfunded mandates and to ensure that any new responsibilities are assigned to the entities or agencies best positioned to take them on effectively. We welcome the opportunity to

engage with this committee to ensure that community board members have the support and resources they need.

Int 0472 would require Borough Presidents to provide equal employment opportunity (EEO) trainings, including anti-sexual harassment training and anti-discrimination training, to community board members. We agree that as public servants, community board members should receive these important trainings that help them understand essential legal issues and better engage with the full diversity of their communities. Employees of City agencies receive EEO and other essential trainings through the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS). While our offices have each taken steps to ensure that community board members receive necessary trainings, we believe it would be more appropriate for DCAS to be tasked with training the over 3,000 community board members and staff across the city, just as they do with City employees. As the author of the City's EEO Citywide policy, DCAS is the subject-matter expert for this training and has both the knowledge and bandwidth to conduct them. Training through DCAS would offer a more streamlined, uniform, and cost-effective way to ensure that community boards can comply with all legally mandated training.

Int 1075 would require borough presidents to provide trainings on legislative processes and parliamentary procedure to local entities, including Community Boards, Community Education Councils (CECs), Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), and Precinct Community Councils (PCCs). While we understand the intent of this legislation, we have concerns about its scope. Our mandate as Borough Presidents is to appoint and support community boards. We currently offer various support and training, however, this expansion of community board training requirements would extend beyond our offices' current capacity and expertise. Given their current relationship to community boards, we suggest this responsibility be tasked to the Civic Engagement Commission, in consultation with Borough Presidents.

When it comes to CECs, BIDs, and PCCs, while each of these entities is vital to community engagement, their responsibilities fall squarely within the mandate and expertise of existing City agencies. We strongly believe that each of these entities deserve to get the support they need from the agencies best equipped to provide it to them; CECs should be supported by the NYC Department of Education; BIDs should be supported by the Department of Small Business Services; and PCCs should be supported by NYPD so that they get the most relevant and appropriate training and resources. For the above reasons, we oppose Int 1075.

Int.1250 would require Borough Boards, Community Boards, and Advisory Boards to publish their by-laws as well as updates to bylaws online within two weeks of any changes. We strongly value transparency in local government and appreciate this legislation's effort to create additional clarity for board members and the public. We encourage the Council to do further engagement with district managers and board members to ensure that they have the resources they need to meet any new requirements in a timely manner.

Int. 1315 would require community boards to email a monthly newsletter and videoconference their meetings and hearings. While many of our community boards have taken steps in recent years to do both of these things, staff capacity and resources remain an ongoing challenge. New requirements like these require additional staff time and resources for already stretched community boards and district managers. Any new requirements must be tied to the funding necessary to meet them.

Finally, Int. 1316 would require the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) to establish an “Office of Community Board Support” tasked with helping community boards find accessible space for their meetings and for their offices. Ensuring that community boards have consistent access to space that is fully accessible is essential for ensuring that the public can equitably participate in board meetings. Our teams consistently hear from our community board members and district managers about the challenges of finding suitable public space to hold community meetings. We believe DCAS is the appropriate entity to directly support community boards with their space needs.

We are grateful to this committee for hosting this important hearing. We look forward to continued partnership to ensure that community boards have the support and resources they need to do their vital work.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



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**TESTIMONY OF THE ARAB AMERICAN FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER BEFORE THE CITY
COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS, STATE AND FEDERAL
LEGISLATION
June 16, 2025**

Good afternoon, Chair Restler and members of the committee on Governmental Operations, state, and federal legislation. My name is Naima Dahir, and I am here on behalf of the Arab American Family Support Center (AAFSC). AAFSC provides culturally and linguistically competent, trauma-informed, multi-generational social services to the growing Arab, Middle Eastern, North African, Muslim, and South Asian communities across New York City. With offices in all five boroughs and services available in over 30 languages, we supported more than 20,000 individuals last year alone.

As a proud coalition member of the Invisible No More campaign, led by the Coalition for Asian American Children and Families, we work to advocate for equitable, accurate, and disaggregated data collection by New York City and State agencies. We are here today to express our strong support for Intro. 1134, which represents a critical step forward in improving how City agencies collect and report race and ethnicity data.

As one of the largest organizations in the nation serving Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) communities, AAFSC witnesses every day the consequences of erasure due to insufficient data that properly showcases our communities. Despite NYC's immense diversity, being home to hundreds of ethnicities, cultures, and languages, MENA communities remain invisible in official data. The lack of disaggregated data has far-reaching consequences across education, healthcare, employment, political representation, and more.

Immigrants, refugees, and their children, from Yemen to Palestine to Amazigh communities across North Africa, have been forced to identify as "White" on government forms, a category that fails to reflect their lived experiences. This classification not only erases identity, but actively obstructs access to services, protections, and representation.

As social service professionals, we see the devastating effects of this misclassification daily. When a child is bullied for being Arab but is asked to check "White" on a school form, our case managers are unable to effectively advocate for culturally responsive support in schools. When anti-Arab and anti-Muslim rhetoric rises, our mental health clinicians lack the data to demonstrate the unique mental health needs of MENA communities, resulting in underdiagnosis, stigma, and inadequate care.

This data gap also distorts how government resources are distributed. Without recognition in data, our communities are left out of decisions about language access services, healthcare investments, and public safety measures. They are also excluded from fair political representation. Redistricting, for example, relies on accurate demographic data to ensure that communities of interest are fairly represented. The continued erasure of MENA identity in data means these communities are

effectively silenced and denied a meaningful voice in democratic processes, undermining their right to self-determination and equitable participation.

It is especially urgent for New York City to pass this bill now, as the federal government continues to jeopardize our access to high-quality data by slashing funding for the Census Bureau, driving staff departures, and actively eroding public trust in both current and future census data collection efforts.

Political uncertainty and ongoing budget cuts at the federal level have already made it difficult to gather accurate, timely, and comprehensive data, particularly for historically undercounted and marginalized communities. Without reliable data, local governments and community-based organizations lack the information needed to make informed decisions, allocate resources equitably, and advocate effectively.

In the absence of consistent federal leadership, New York City must take the lead in strengthening local data systems. As our city continues to grow more diverse and more populous than ever before, passing Intro. 1134 is a bold and necessary step toward securing detailed, disaggregated race and ethnicity data that truly reflects the communities we see every day, especially those that have long been rendered invisible.

Intro. 1134 is not just about data, it is about justice, equity, and visibility. It is about making sure every New Yorker is recognized, heard, and considered in the policies and services that shape their lives.

I want to thank Councilmember Shekar Krishnan for his advocacy and for championing this bill, and we ask the Committee on Government Operations, State & Federal Legislation to vote unanimously in favor of this bill without delay. Our communities cannot afford to be invisible any longer.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.



**Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation
Mon, June 16, 2024 @ 10:00 AM**

**Christine Serdjenian Yearwood, New York Field Organizer
Armenian-American Advancement Network**

My name is Christine Serdjenian Yearwood, and I am the New York Field Organizer at Armenian-American Advancement Network. Thank you very much for holding this hearing and providing the opportunity to submit our testimony.

Armenian-American Advancement Network is an advocacy and research organization fighting anti-Armenian racism in the United States, teaching Armenian-American history, and forwarding civil rights, immigrant rights, and refugee rights for our and all communities. Armenian-American Advancement Network is a proud member of CACF's *Invisible No More* campaign, which has pushed for data disaggregation in New York for over a decade.

Armenia is a nation in West Asia within the South West Asian and North African (SWANA/MENA) region. We are transnational indigenous people whose homeland spans many current-day nation states, and is not limited to one geographic border. Armenians continue to face ongoing erasure, displacement and discrimination in our homelands. Every year, Armenians immigrate to New York City, often by way of traumatic events. Armenians have made New York City home for generations, coming here as a result of the Armenian Genocide, Baku pogroms, 1988 Armenian Earthquake, Syrian War, Beirut Blast, Artsakh Wars in 2016 and 2020, and ethnic cleansing in 2023. We persevere and enrich this city with our skills, culture and traditions.

New York has six Armenian churches and two Armenian day schools, as well as cultural centers, restaurants, and grocery stores. Yet despite our community's presence and growth here in New York City, we are invisibilized in data collection and disaggregation, education curriculum, cultural programming, support systems, and by health care service providers. We have long histories of immigration, refugeehood, and racialization, as well as legal, educational, workplace and linguistic marginalization in the United States. As revealed by recent investigations, anti-Armenian sentiment and dark money and influence have bought New York City Mayor Eric Adams's favor and shaped his priorities and budget. He and his staff members took [unreported trips to Azerbaijan](#) and solicited illegal campaign contributions and luxury travel from Turkish foreign nationals with the explicit understanding that Adams would then deliberately erase the experiences of Armenian-American New Yorkers and our histories. Just two years ago, Citigroup, the nation's third largest bank, [was found to have illegally discriminated against credit-card applicants who the bank identified as Armenian-American](#). [And hate crimes against Armenian-Americans have risen in the United States within the last five years](#). [In the Glendale Commission on the Status of Women Prepared by Mount Saint Mary's University in California](#), disaggregated data showed that Armenian women have opportunity gaps in educational

attainment and employment, and are also less economically secure than women as a whole in the City of Glendale. We have no such data about the Armenian population in New York City, as there is currently no uniform standard for race and ethnicity data collection and reporting across New York City agencies. We and other MENA populations remain invisible, our challenges unrecognized and our needs unmet, currently categorized within the 'White' checkbox in New York City, which fails to capture our lived experiences outlined above. Intro. 1134 is a social justice resolution for our communities.

Armenian-American Advancement Network fully supports Intro. 1134 to improve New York City's race and ethnicity data collection and reporting process through data disaggregation. A granular approach to data collection across NYC agencies would promote greater transparency and accountability in addressing the unique challenges faced by specific AAPI and MENA ethnic groups – from Armenian and Iranian to Filipino, Bangladeshi, Indo-Caribbean and beyond, who have historically been undercounted or rendered invisible by city agencies – to advocate for distinct needs and monitor progress on issues affecting our specific populations. Intro. 1134 will provide agencies, councilmembers, and community based organizations with critical, high-quality disaggregated ethnicity data in order to apply for funding and resources, make policy decisions, and deliver services truly responsive to the unique needs of all our communities.

This is our moment to amplify the voices of the communities we serve and ensure that everyone is seen in the data. Disaggregated data gives us the ability to be counted, seen, and serviced by equitable and effective public policy. We urge the New York City Council to pass Intro. 1134 to enhance the health and economic well-being of all of us as New Yorkers.

Sincerely,

Christine Serdjenian Yearwood
New York Field Organizer
Armenian-American Advancement Network

Understanding Int. 1134

Frequently Asked Questions about Int. 1134
from CACF's Invisible No More Campaign

CACF

Coalition For Asian American
Children+Families

What is Int. 1134?



Int. 1134 is a bill introduced in the NYC Council by **CM Shekar Krishnan** to improve New York City's race and ethnicity data collection and reporting process for New Yorkers accessing city services.

This bill would require all NYC agencies collecting demographic information to **collect and report detailed ethnicity data on our communities**.

Why Int. 1134 for NYC?



There is currently **no uniform standard** for race and ethnicity data collection and reporting across NYC agencies.

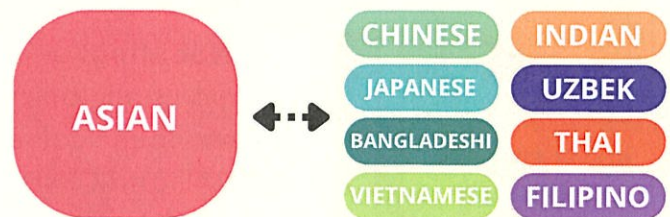
At the moment, agency data **leave out the diversity of NYC communities** despite NYC being home to hundreds of ethnicities, heritages, and languages spoken.

What does Int. 1134 do?

- Require all city agencies to use the **same standards** when collecting race and ethnicity data.
- Require **more detailed options** beyond broad categories like "Asian," "Black," and "Hispanic," but instead "Indian," "Nigerian," and "Cuban."
- Require agencies to **publish the data collected** on an annual basis and information on which agency team is responsible for **implementation**.
- Provide agencies with **critical, high-quality data** in order to make policy decisions and deliver services **truly responsive to the unique needs** of all communities.

What is Data Disaggregation?

Data disaggregation is simply the process of breaking down a large group into smaller, more specific groups.



Data disaggregation offers a **more precise picture of NYC communities** and their needs.

Who would Int. 1134 impact?

This bill impacts **all New Yorkers** who use city services. All New Yorkers will also benefit.



Int. 1134 would allow a person filling out NYC forms to provide more accurate race/ethnicity information and enable agencies to collect such granular race/ethnicity data that would ultimately help **make NYC's demographic data better and more accurate than ever before**.

Does Int. 1134 require the collection of immigration status?

Int. 1134 does **NOT** require NYC agencies to collect any information about immigration status.

This bill only focuses on improving how the city collects race and ethnicity data. It is **not related at all to immigration status**.

Understanding Int. 1134

Frequently Asked Questions about Int. 1134
from CACF's Invisible No More Campaign

CACF

Coalition For Asian American
Children+Families

Will my privacy be protected?

Privacy protection is critically important to CACF INM. According to Int. 1134, NYC agencies collecting race and ethnicity data would:

Adhere to all federal, state, and local privacy laws.

Not affect a person's eligibility for services such as SNAP and Cash Assistance.

Be entirely voluntary.

Use such data to enhance services to better meet New Yorkers' needs.

How can our communities benefit from Int. 1134?

Community organizations can show the specific needs in their communities when applying for funding or resources.

NYC agencies can see which services are reaching communities and target them more strategically, esp. for communities overlooked in the past.

NYC Legislators can craft legislation with a clearer understanding of impacts on NYC communities.

Why isn't language data enough for agencies to understand NYC's diversity?

Language data alone doesn't tell the full story of a community's needs, esp. when it comes to communities as complex as Asian communities, making **ethnicity data crucial in filling the gaps**.

Many second or third-generation Americans identify strongly with their ethnic heritage, but **primarily speak English**.

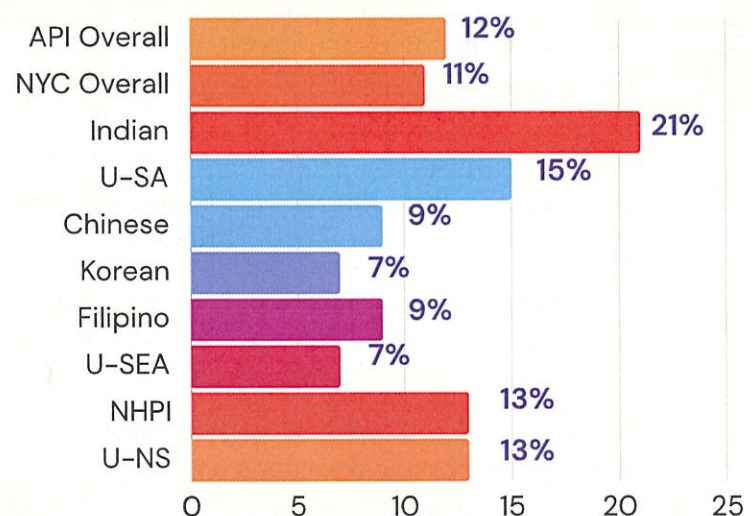
Relying on **language alone would neglect** these community members' needs completely.

Different ethnic groups may **speak the same language**, but also have very different needs.

Why do our communities need disaggregated ethnicity data?

Disaggregated ethnicity data is **essential to address each community's needs**. APIs show an overall diabetes rate of 11%, below NYC's 12% average, but Indian New Yorkers face a much higher rate of 21%. Without detailed data, disparities like this stay hidden.

Adults with diabetes in NYC



Source: 2021 NYC DOHMH report, [Health of Asians and Pacific Islanders in New York City](#).

Invisible No More: Championing Data Inclusion for Asian and NHPI New Yorkers

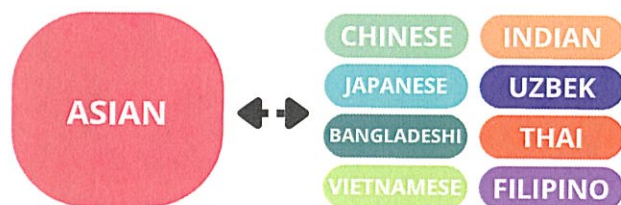


Who We Are:

- **Coalition for Asian American Children and Families (CACF)** is the nation's only pan-Asian children and families' advocacy organization bringing together community-based organizations, youth, and communities to fight for equity and opportunity for all Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) New Yorkers.
- **Invisible No More (INM)** is CACF's nearly 15-year campaign for AA and NHPI data disaggregation from NYC, NYS, and federal agencies.

What is Data Disaggregation?

- It means breaking down broader racial categories into specific ethnic groups to reveal important differences between and within communities.



- Government agencies even typically lump Asian Americans (AA) and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders (NHPI) together as one group, **hiding different needs** between Asians and NHPis.
- Without detailed ethnicity data, the unique challenges facing specific ethnic communities **remain invisible**, leaving their needs unmet.
- Disaggregated data by ethnicity and language helps policymakers and advocates develop **targeted solutions** for marginalized communities.



Coalition-Building: INM's Guiding Principle

- Cultivating a **broad coalition** representing NYC's many communities to advocate for inclusionary ethnicity data has long been core to INM's vision.
- **INM Task Force** is a group of Asian-serving CBOs that actively strategize with INM for ethnicity data.
- **INM Partners** are organizations from outside CACF's membership eager to play an active role to advocate for disaggregated ethnicity data.

NYC Int. 1134

- CACF's Invisible No More Campaign leads advocacy for the **data disaggregation needs of Asian and NHPI New Yorkers and all communities in New York City**, and is fighting to **pass Int. 1134**.
- Int. 1134 would **standardize race and ethnicity** demographic data collection and reporting across all NYC agencies and across all seven major race/ethnicity categories.
- **Goal:** NYC agencies to collect ethnicity data that would be truly representative all communities given immense changes in population since 2010.
- **Int. 1134 would require NYC agencies to:**
 - Collect and report detailed ethnic subgroups for the first time (Japanese, Arab, Haitian)
 - Publish agency race/ethnicity data in one central webpage for public access
 - Provide their implementation plan
 - Update New Yorkers on how this data is improving agency services and policies
 - Continue to protect New Yorkers' data privacy
- **Better data** means **better services** for our communities, and **better use of our city dollars**.



2021 NYS Data Disaggregation Law

In 2021, INM won **NYS's first-ever** AA and NHPI data disaggregation laws (S7821/A8743). The law requires state agencies, boards, and commissions to collect detailed data on:

- Top 10 **Asian** ethnic groups by population
- Top 3 **NHPI** ethnic groups by population

CACF is **monitoring implementation** to ensure agencies are collecting and releasing this critical data.

Join the Fight to Be Invisible No More!

Contact us for more information:

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Senior Data Policy Coordinator

Jeemin Cha | ✉ jcha@cacf.org
Data Policy Coordinator



**Coalition For Asian American
Children+Families**

Int. 1134 Public Hearing

June 16, 2025

Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

Good afternoon, my name is Jeemin Cha and I am Data Policy Coordinator at the Coalition for Asian American Children and Families (CACF). Thank you very much to Chair Lincoln Restler and the Committee on Government Operations for holding this hearing and providing the opportunity to testify in support of Int. 1134.

The Invisible No More campaign, led by the Coalition for Asian American Children and Families (CACF), has been advocating for 15 years to ensure that New York City and State governments collect accurate, disaggregated data and information about our diverse New York City communities. Our coalition made up of more than 90 and growing AAPI serving community-based organizations are here today to express our strong support for Intro. 1134 – a transformative piece of legislation that will significantly expand how New York City agencies collect and disaggregate race and ethnicity data from New Yorkers accessing city services.

The impact of Int. 1134's passage will be immediately felt not only by our AA & NHPI communities, but by other BIPOC communities as well. It will finally bring collective visibility to many communities who have long been ignored in the city's data collection and reporting practices by city agencies.

Int. 1134 will especially benefit AAPI communities that have been historically undercounted or rendered invisible, including but not limited to Bangladeshi, Nepali, Sri Lankan (South Asian), Laotian, Hmong, Burmese, Cambodian (Southeast Asian), and Indo-Caribbean populations. Allowing these communities to be under the broad classification of "Asian," or even worse, "Other or Unknown" allows them to be overlooked in critical areas such as education, employment, housing, healthcare, and political representation, further perpetuating their invisibility and unmet needs. Any delay in passing Int. 1134 hinders our city government's ability to consider those needs in decision-making and resource allocation.



**Coalition For Asian American
Children+Families**

Currently, New York City agencies only collect and disaggregate data for the top 30 most populous ancestry groups, and just seven agencies are legally required to do so. This narrow scope leaves out critical populations and limits the city's ability to address disparities effectively. Int. 1134 goes beyond the top 30 and represents the many ethnic identities that make up our city's population. It requires not just seven, but all city agencies to disaggregate our data.

Most notably, this bill will incentivize city agencies to evaluate and improve their services based on more accurate, disaggregated data. It's time to move beyond the familiar political language that "there is not enough data on our communities." We must ensure that data reflects the lived experiences of our AAPI communities and affirms that we are a force too powerful — and too vital — to be overlooked.

I want to thank Council Member Shekar Krishnan for his advocacy and for championing this bill, and we ask the Committee on Government Operations, State & Federal Legislation to vote unanimously in favor of this bill without delay. Thank you for your time.

Thank you your time,

Jeemin Cha
Data Policy Coordinator

Email: jcha@cacf.org



June 16, 2025

Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

Testimony in Support of Int. 1134

Lloyd Feng, Senior Data Policy Coordinator

Good morning, Chair Restler and committee members. My name is Lloyd Feng from the Coalition for Asian American Children and Families (**CACF**) where I co-lead the Invisible No More Campaign (INM), and I'm here to underline additional reasons that this committee and the NYC Council ought to support and pass Int. 1134 (please see attached for additional information on INM and Int. 1134).

NYC is renowned for its diversity, attracting people from all over the world to build a life here. According to the 2020 Census results, there are nearly 200 racial and ethnic groups represented among NYC's growing population. Despite the diversity of cultures and communities that we all see everyday around us, NYC agencies are not collecting granular, high-quality demographic data that reflects NYC's diversity, instead relying on broad racial/ethnic categories ("Asian," "Black," "Latino," "White," etc.) that ultimately mask unique cultural nuances and different socioeconomic needs.

Why does this matter? Well, let's look at Asian New Yorkers and diabetes prevalence. According to the DOHMH's [2021 Health of Asian and Pacific Islander New Yorkers Report](#), 12% of Asian and Pacific Islander New Yorkers, which is quite similar to the 13% of New Yorkers across racial and ethnic groups that experience it. But this kind of data alone is misleading. 21% of Indian New Yorkers have diabetes as opposed to just 9% of Chinese and 7% of Korean New Yorkers. This kind of disaggregated ethnicity data provides health practitioners, policymakers, and our community members themselves with better information about who diabetes impacts, guiding more targeted research, policymaking, and medical decisions. **Relying solely on broad race/ethnicity categories is no longer a useful way to measure and understand all New Yorkers' needs, and may actually be putting more children and families at risk.**

The bottom line: Int. 1134 updates NYC's race and ethnicity data truly befitting the world's capital and modernizes agencies demographic data collection now that we are one quarter of the way through the 21st century. This bill helps ensure that every New Yorker – whether you're African American, Nigerian, or Jamaican; Korean, Filipino, or



Bangladeshi; Cuban, Dominican, or Salvadoran; Polish, Italian, or Ukrainian – gets counted and gets served.

Int. 1134 prioritizes common sense governance, government efficiency, responsible government, and ensuring our city serves everyone effectively.

I would like to thank Committee Chair Restler for holding this important hearing and Councilmember Krishnan for his leadership in championing this bill. I implore this committee to support Int. 1134 so we can ensure New Yorkers and their needs are understood better than ever before.

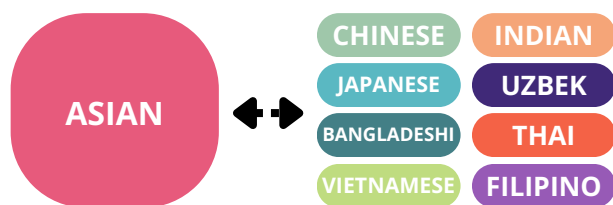
Invisible No More: Championing Data Inclusion for Asian and NHPI New Yorkers

Who We Are:

- **Coalition for Asian American Children and Families (CACF)** is the nation's only pan-Asian children and families' advocacy organization bringing together community-based organizations, youth, and communities to fight for equity and opportunity for all Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) New Yorkers.
- **Invisible No More (INM)** is CACF's nearly 15-year campaign for AA and NHPI data disaggregation from NYC, NYS, and federal agencies.

What is Data Disaggregation?

- It means breaking down broader racial categories into specific ethnic groups to reveal important differences between and within communities.



- Government agencies even typically lump Asian Americans (AA) and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders (NHPI) together as one group, **hiding different needs** between Asians and NHPs.
- Without detailed ethnicity data, the unique challenges facing specific ethnic communities **remain invisible**, leaving their needs unmet.
- Disaggregated data by ethnicity and language helps policymakers and advocates develop **targeted solutions** for marginalized communities.



Coalition-Building: INM's Guiding Principle

- Cultivating a **broad coalition** representing NYC's many communities to advocate for inclusionary ethnicity data has long been core to INM's vision.
- **INM Task Force** is a group of Asian-serving CBOs that actively strategize with INM for ethnicity data.
- **INM Partners** are organizations from outside CACF's membership eager to play an active role to advocate for disaggregated ethnicity data.

NYC Int. 1134

- CACF's Invisible No More Campaign leads advocacy for the **data disaggregation needs of Asian and NHPI New Yorkers and all communities in New York City**, and is fighting to **pass Int. 1134**.
- Int. 1134 would **standardize race and ethnicity** demographic data collection and reporting across all NYC agencies and across all seven major race/ethnicity categories.
- **Goal:** NYC agencies to collect ethnicity data that would be truly representative all communities given immense changes in population since 2010.
- **Int. 1134 would require NYC agencies to:**
 - Collect and report detailed ethnic subgroups for the first time (Japanese, Arab, Haitian)
 - Publish agency race/ethnicity data in one central webpage for public access
 - Provide their implementation plan
 - Update New Yorkers on how this data is improving agency services and policies
 - Continue to protect New Yorkers' data privacy
- **Better data** means **better services** for our communities, and **better use of our city dollars**.



2021 NYS Data Disaggregation Law

In 2021, INM won **NYS's first-ever** AA and NHPI data disaggregation laws (S7821/A8743). The law requires state agencies, boards, and commissions to collect detailed data on:

- Top 10 **Asian** ethnic groups by population
- Top 3 **NHPI** ethnic groups by population

CACF is **monitoring implementation** to ensure agencies are collecting and releasing this critical data.

Join the Fight to Be Invisible No More!

Contact us for more information:

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Senior Data Policy Coordinator

Jeemin Cha | ✉ jcha@cacf.org
Data Policy Coordinator

Understanding Int. 1134

Frequently Asked Questions about Int. 1134
from CACF's Invisible No More Campaign

CACF
Coalition For Asian American
Children+Families

What is Int. 1134?



Int. 1134 is a bill introduced in the NYC Council by **CM Shekar Krishnan** to improve New York City's race and ethnicity data collection and reporting process for New Yorkers accessing city services.

This bill would require all NYC agencies collecting demographic information to **collect and report detailed ethnicity data on our communities**.

Why Int. 1134 for NYC?



There is currently **no uniform standard** for race and ethnicity data collection and reporting across NYC agencies.

At the moment, agency data **leave out the diversity of NYC communities** despite NYC being home to hundreds of ethnicities, heritages, and languages spoken.

What does Int. 1134 do?

- Require all city agencies to use the **same standards** when collecting race and ethnicity data.

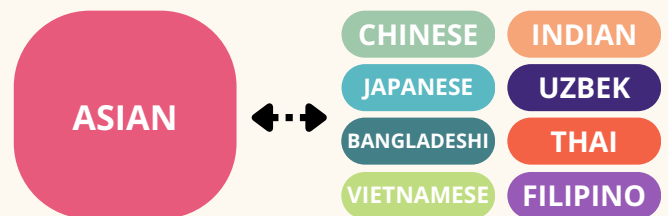
- Require **more detailed options** beyond broad categories like "Asian," "Black," and "Hispanic," but instead "Indian," "Nigerian," and "Cuban."

- Require agencies to **publish the data collected** on an annual basis and information on which agency team is responsible for **implementation**.

- Provide agencies with **critical, high-quality data** in order to make policy decisions and deliver services **truly responsive to the unique needs** of all communities.

What is Data Disaggregation?

Data disaggregation is simply the process of breaking down a large group into smaller, more specific groups.



Data disaggregation offers a **more precise picture of NYC communities** and their needs.

Who would Int. 1134 impact?

This bill impacts **all New Yorkers** who use city services. All New Yorkers will also benefit.



Int. 1134 would allow a person filling out NYC forms to provide more accurate race/ethnicity information and enable agencies to collect such granular race/ethnicity data that would ultimately help **make NYC's demographic data better and more accurate than ever before**.

Does Int. 1134 require the collection of immigration status?

Int. 1134 does **NOT** require NYC agencies to collect any information about immigration status.

This bill only focuses on improving how the city collects race and ethnicity data. It is **not related at all to immigration status**.

For more information about Data Policy or Int. 1134, contact jcha@cacf.org and lfeng@cacf.org.

Understanding Int. 1134

Frequently Asked Questions about Int. 1134
from CACF's Invisible No More Campaign

CACF

Coalition For Asian American
Children+Families

Will my privacy be protected?

Privacy protection is critically important to CACF INM. According to Int. 1134, NYC agencies collecting race and ethnicity data would:

Adhere to all federal, state, and local privacy laws.

Not affect a person's eligibility for services such as SNAP and Cash Assistance.

Be entirely voluntary.

Use such data to enhance services to better meet New Yorkers' needs.

How can our communities benefit from Int. 1134?

Community organizations can show the specific needs in their communities when applying for funding or resources.

NYC agencies can see which services are reaching communities and target them more strategically, esp. for communities overlooked in the past.

NYC Legislators can craft legislation with a clearer understanding of impacts on NYC communities.

Why isn't language data enough for agencies to understand NYC's diversity?

Language data alone doesn't tell the full story of a community's needs, esp. when it comes to communities as complex as Asian communities, making **ethnicity data crucial in filling the gaps.**

Many second or third-generation Americans identify strongly with their ethnic heritage, but **primarily speak English.**

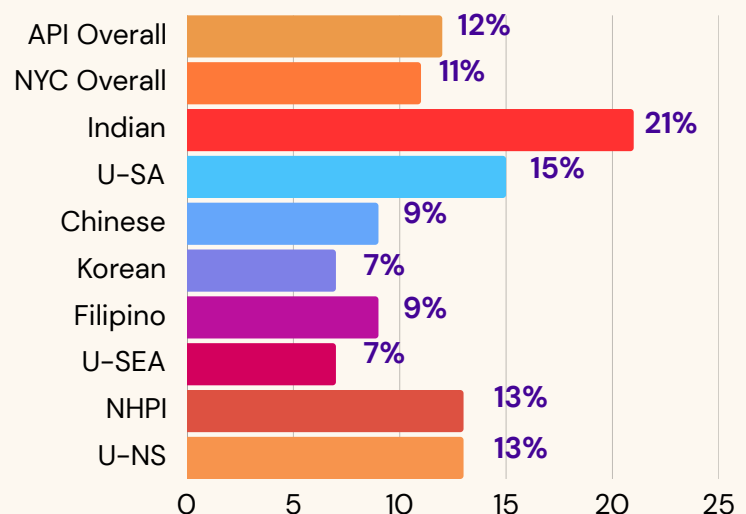
Relying on **language alone would neglect** these community members' needs completely.

Different ethnic groups may **speak the same language**, but also have very different needs.

Why do our communities need disaggregated ethnicity data?

Disaggregated ethnicity data is essential to address each community's needs. APIs show an overall diabetes rate of 11%, below NYC's 12% average, but Indian New Yorkers face a much higher rate of 21%. Without detailed data, disparities like this stay hidden.

Adults with diabetes in NYC



Source: 2021 NYC DOHMH report, [Health of Asians and Pacific Islanders in New York City](#).

For more information about Data Policy or Int. 1134, contact jcha@cacf.org and lfeng@cacf.org.

Main Components of the NYC Council Bill [Int. 1134](#)

1. Expanded Race and Ethnicity Categories

- Creates three tiers of categories for collecting race/ethnicity data:
 - Minimum categories (broad groups like Asian, Black/African American, etc.)
 - Regional subgroups (geographic regions like East Asian, Caribbean, etc.)
 - Detailed subgroups (detailed identities like Japanese, Jamaican, etc.)
- Also adds **transnational categories** (like Indo-Caribbean) that cross multiple groups
- Adopts 2024 SPD 15's required reporting categories for minimum and detailed categories

2. Standardized Data Collection

- Requires all city agencies that collect demographic information to use standardized forms
- Forms must include language that indicates that providing race/ethnicity information is voluntary
- Must include a statement that responses won't affect eligibility for services

3. Responsibilities of the Mayor's Office of Operations (Ops) & Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA)

- Requires Ops and MOIA to manage a public webpage listing all race and ethnicity categories and hierarchies (NYC race and ethnicity code list)
- Requires Ops and MOIA to develop the standardized forms
- Requires public hearings when agencies can't update forms
- Requires Ops to publish annual data collected from agencies in a single webpage accessible to the public

4. Responsibilities of NYC Agencies that Collect Demographic Data

- Requires agencies to update forms within one year of the law's effective date
- Requires agencies to publish information on the specific forms and number of forms eligible for updating to include the detailed categories
- Requires agencies to publish information identifying the specific agency personnel managing implementation of the law and the agency's implementation plan in one place
- Requires agencies to seek waivers for forms they can't directly amend

5. Additional Reporting and Service Improvement

- Agencies must evaluate their services based on the collected data
- Annual reports required on how services are modified based on the data

6. Privacy Protections

- Small groups (1-5 people) will be represented by a symbol rather than a number
- Protects student and family privacy

Int. 1134: Example Demographic Data Form

This illustrates how standardized race/ethnicity data collection might appear under Int. 1134, which would require NYC agencies to use consistent reporting formats. This sample reflects CACF's vision for implementation and is not an officially adopted agency form. The legislation requires including minimum categories, top subgroups, and write-in options.

What is your race and/or ethnicity?

Select all that apply and enter additional details in the space below

☐ **American Indian or Alaska Native** - Provide details below

- ☐ Aztec ☐ Taino ☐ Maya ☐ Cherokee ☐ Blackfeet Tribe of the Black Indian Reservation of Montana
☐ Inca ☐ Mixtec ☐ Navajo Nation ☐ Mohawk ☐ Arawak

Enter, for example, Choctaw, Shinnecock Indian Nation, Nome Eskimo Community, etc.

☐ **Asian** - Provide details below

- ☐ Chinese ☐ Asian Indian ☐ Bangladeshi ☐ Filipino ☐ Korean
☐ Pakistani ☐ Japanese ☐ Vietnamese ☐ Uzbek ☐ Taiwanese

Enter, for example, Thai, Afghan, Guyanese, etc.

☐ **Black or African American** - Provide details below

- ☐ African American ☐ Jamaican ☐ Haitian ☐ Guyanese ☐ Trinidadian & Tobagonian
☐ Nigerian ☐ West Indian ☐ Ghanaian ☐ Senegalese ☐ Ethiopian

Enter, for example, Somali, Congolese, Barbadian, etc.

☐ **Hispanic or Latino** - Provide details below

- ☐ Dominican ☐ Puerto Rican ☐ Mexican ☐ Ecuadorian ☐ Colombian
☐ Salvadoran ☐ Honduran ☐ Peruvian ☐ Guatemalan ☐ Cuban

Enter, for example, Panamanian, Argentinian, Venezuelan, etc.

☐ **Middle Eastern or North African** - Provide details below

- ☐ Egyptian ☐ Turkish ☐ Israeli ☐ Lebanese ☐ Iranian
☐ Moroccan ☐ Syrian ☐ Palestinian ☐ Yemeni ☐ Armenian

Enter, for example, Iraqi, Jordanian, Amazigh, etc.

☐ **Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander** - Provide details below

- ☐ Native Hawaiian ☐ Samoan ☐ Chamorro ☐ Fijian ☐ Tongan
☐ Maori ☐ Guamanian ☐ Marshallese ☐ Papua New Guinean ☐ Tahitian

Enter, for example, Palauan, I-Kiribati, Chuukese, etc.

☐ **White** - Provide details below

- ☐ Italian ☐ Irish ☐ German ☐ Polish ☐ English
☐ Russian ☐ Ukrainian ☐ French ☐ Greek ☐ Hungarian

Enter, for example, Albanian, Romanian, Australian, etc.

☐ **Other Race and/or Ethnicity** - Provide details below

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ): Int. 1134 常見問題（FAQ）：第1134號提案

Common Questions 常見問題

What is data disaggregation?

什麼是族裔數據分類？

Data disaggregation means breaking down a large group into smaller, more specific groups.

For example, instead of just collecting data on "Asian Americans," disaggregated data would show specific ethnic groups like "Chinese," "Indian," and "Filipino." This gives a clearer picture of who makes up the community.

This "one-size-fits-all" approach hides important differences in needs and challenges. Breaking down the data by specific ethnic groups will help identify community needs that have been overlooked for too long.

族裔數據分類是指將一個大族裔群體細分為較小、較具體的群體。

例如，不是只收集「亞裔美國人」的資料，細分後的資料會顯示具體的族裔群體，如「華裔」、「印度裔」和「菲律賓裔」，這能更清楚地呈現社區的族裔組成。

那種「一刀切」的方法往往掩蓋了各族裔群體在需求和所面臨困難上的重要差異。根據具體族裔來分類資料有助於辨別長期被忽視的社區需求。

What is Intro. 1134?

什麼是第1134號提案？

Intro. 1134 is a bill introduced in the City Council to **improve New York City's race and ethnicity data collection and reporting process** for those accessing city services. This means all NYC agencies collecting demographic information must now collect and report detailed ethnicity data on our communities.

第1134號提案是市議會提出的一項法案，旨在改善提供市府

	<p>服務時，紐約市對種族與族裔資料的收集與報告程序。這意味著所有收集人口統計資訊的市府機構，現在都必須收集並報告社區詳細的族裔資料。</p>
<p>Why do we need this bill? 我們為什麼需要這項法案？</p>	<p>NYC agencies currently use different methods to collect information about race and ethnicity. This makes it hard to get a complete picture of our diverse communities.</p> <p>This bill would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require all city agencies to use the same standards when collecting race and ethnicity data • Require more detailed options beyond broad categories like "Asian," "Black," or "White" • Help make government services more responsive to the unique needs of all communities <p>For example, instead of counting someone as "Asian," agencies would record more specific ethnic identities like "Chinese," "Filipino," or "Vietnamese." This helps reveal the rich diversity within the broader Asian American community.</p> <p>紐約市各政府機構目前採取不同的方法收集種族與族裔資訊。這使得紐約市難以全面了解多元社區的真實情況。</p> <p>這項法案將會：</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 要求所有市府機構在收集種族與族裔資料時，使用統一的標準 · 要求提供比「亞裔」、「非裔」或「白人」等寬泛分類更詳細的選項 · 幫助政府服務部門更及時回應各族裔社區的獨特需求 <p>例如，不把某人歸類為「亞裔」，政府機構將記錄更具體的族裔身分，比如「華裔」、「菲律賓裔」或「越南裔」。這</p>

	<p>有助於呈現亞裔美國人社區豐富的多樣性。</p>
<p>Who does this bill impact? 這項法案會影響到誰？</p>	<p>This bill impacts all New Yorkers who use city services.</p> <p>When you fill out forms for city programs, this bill ensures your race and ethnicity information is recorded more accurately. Instead of using only broad categories, forms will include more detailed options that better reflect New York's diverse communities.</p> <p>這項法案會影響所有使用市府服務的紐約市民。</p> <p>當你填寫市府計劃的表格時，這項法案確保你的種族與族裔資訊會更準確地得到記錄。表格將不再僅使用寬泛的分類，而是會提供更詳細的選項，能更好地反映紐約市的多元化社區。</p>
<p>Does this bill mandate the collection of immigration status? 這項法案是否強制收集移民身份資料？</p>	<p>This bill does <i>NOT</i> collect any information about immigration status.</p> <p>This bill <i>only</i> focuses on improving how the city collects race and ethnicity data. It has nothing to do with immigration status.</p> <p>這項法案不收集任何有關移民身份的資料。</p> <p>這項法案僅著重於改善市府收集種族與族裔資料的方式，與移民身份無關。</p>
<p>Will my privacy be protected? 我的隱私會受到保護嗎？</p>	<p>Your privacy is protected. All data collection under this bill:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is completely voluntary • Is anonymous • Does not affect your eligibility for services • Must follow all federal, state, and local privacy

	<p>laws</p> <p>The goal is for city services to better meet everyone's needs.</p> <p>您的隱私受到保護，本法案下的所有資料收集：</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 完全自願 · 匿名 · 不影響您獲得服務的資格 · 必須遵守所有聯邦、州、和地方的隱私權法律 <p>本法案的目的是讓市府服務能更好地滿足每個人的需求。</p>
<p>How will the government protect sensitive data on our communities?</p> <p>政府將如何保護我們族裔的敏感資料？</p>	<p>Int 1134 requires all agencies to follow federal, state, and local privacy laws to keep your information safe.</p> <p>When you share your race and ethnicity information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's completely anonymous. • It cannot be used to identify you personally. • It will not affect your eligibility for services. <p>第1134號提案要求所有機構遵守聯邦、州和地方的隱私權法，以保護您的訊息安全。</p> <p>當您提供種族和族裔訊息時：</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 完全匿名 · 不能用來識別您的個人身份 · 不會影響您獲得服務的資格
<p>How can advocates and government use the disaggregated data to serve their</p>	<p>Better data leads to better services for our communities.</p>

<p>communities? 倡導者和政府如何使用族裔數據分類來服務族群？</p>	<p>With more detailed information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community organizations can show the specific needs in their communities when applying for funding or resources. • Government agencies can see which services are reaching communities and which ones aren't. • NYC policymakers can direct resources where they're truly needed, especially for communities that have been overlooked in the past. <p>This helps ensure all New Yorkers receive the services they need, regardless of which ethnic community they belong to.</p> <p>更精確的資料能為族群帶來更好的服務。</p> <p>有了更詳細的資訊：</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 社區組織在申請資金或資源時，可以表明族群的具體需求。 · 政府機構可以了解哪些服務已經覆蓋族群，哪些沒有。 · 紐約市的決策者可以將資源用到真正需要的地方，特別是那些過去被忽視的社區。 <p>這有助於確保所有紐約市民獲得他們所需的服務，無論他們來自哪個族裔。</p>
<p>If the New York City Council passed a data disaggregation bill in 2016, what is the need for introducing a new law now? 如果紐約市議會在2016年曾通</p>	<p>In 2016, the New York City Council enacted Local Laws 126, 127, and 128, requiring the collection of demographic information from individuals seeking city services, including data on ancestry, multiracial identity, sexual orientation, and gender identity.</p> <p>The 2016 law was a good first step, but it had</p>

過一項族裔數據分類法案，為什麼現在還需要提出新的法律？

limitations:

- It only collected data on the 30 largest ancestry groups in NYC, which left out a lot of communities.
- It only applied to seven NYC agencies.
- It lacked stronger requirements of agencies to adopt the changes into their own administrative data.

Int 1134 fixes these problems by:

- Applying the changes to all NYC agencies,
- Aligning NYC agencies to the most updated federal race/ethnicity standards,
- Requiring agencies to collect for at least 14 communities within each of the seven race/ethnicity groups,
- Mandating agencies follow the same coding requirements for responses they receive,
- Providing explicit implementation and reporting requirements.

在2016年，紐約市議會頒布了第126、127和128號地方法，要求收集尋求市府服務者的人口統計資料，包括祖籍、多種族身份、性取向和性別認同等資料。

2016年的法律是一個好的起步，但也存在一些局限：

- 它只收集紐約市30個最大祖籍群體的資料，這使得許多族裔被忽視。
- 它僅適用於七個市府機構。
- 沒有強制要求各機構採納這些變更並將其納入行政資料。

第1134號提案通過以下方式解決了以上問題：

- 將這些變更用於紐約市政府所有機構，
- 使紐約市機構與聯邦最新的種族/族裔標準一致，
- 要求各機構在七大種族/族裔群體中各收集至少14個族裔的資料，

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 強制要求各機構對所收到的回應遵循相同的編碼要求， ● 有明確的落實和報告要求。
<p>Why do agencies need to collect ethnicity data? Couldn't language data be enough for agencies to use in order to understand the diversity of NYC communities?</p> <p>為什麼機構需要收集族裔資料？收集語言資料不足以讓各機構了解紐約市社區的族裔多樣性嗎？</p>	<p>Language data alone doesn't tell the full story of a community's needs.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many second or third-generation Americans identify strongly with their ethnic heritage, but primarily speak English. • Relying only on language would miss these community members' needs completely. • Different ethnic groups may speak the same language, but have very different needs. <p>The broad race/ethnicity categories (Asian, Hispanic/Latino, Black, Middle Eastern and North African (MENA), White, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (NHPI), American Indian Alaska Native) hide important differences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some Asian ethnic groups have much higher poverty rates than others. • Chinese Americans show the highest income inequality within their group—the richest Chinese American families earn 19.2 times more than the poorest. <p>Collecting both ethnicity and language data gives a more complete picture of who needs services and what kind of services they need.</p> <p>僅僅依靠語言資料並不能完全反映社區的需求。</p> <p>例如：</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 許多第二代或第三代美國人雖然主要說英文，但他們對自己的族裔傳承有著強烈的認同感。 ● 僅依賴語言資料會完全忽視這些社區成員的需求。 ● 不同的族裔群體成員可能講同一種語言，但他們的需求卻

	<p>可能截然不同。</p> <p>寬泛的種族/族裔分類（亞裔、西語裔/拉丁裔、黑人、中東和北非、白人、夏威夷原住民和太平洋島民、美國阿拉斯加印第安原住民）隱藏了重要的差異：</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 某些亞裔族群的貧困率遠高於其他族群。 ● 華裔美國人群體內的收入不平等最為明顯—最富有的華裔美國家庭的收入比最貧困家庭多19.2倍。 <p>收集族裔和語言資料能更完整地掌握誰需要服務，以及他們需要哪種類型的服務。</p>
<p>In 2021, Governor Hochul signed the AA & NHPI Data Disaggregation Law. How does Int 1134 differ from the NYS law?</p> <p>2021年，州長霍楚簽署了亞裔、夏威夷原住民與太平洋島民族裔細分法。第1134號提案與這項紐約州法律有何不同？</p>	<p>They cover different government agencies and different communities:</p> <p>The 2021 New York State law:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Only applies to state government agencies. ● Only requires disaggregated ethnicity data for <i>Asian</i> and <i>NHPI</i> communities. ● Does not affect most NYC agencies. <p>Int 1134:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Applies specifically to all New York City agencies. ● Requires detailed data collection across the seven major racial/ethnic categories, not just Asian and NHPI communities. ● Requires more inclusionary collection and reporting for Asian communities. <p>In short, Int 1134 fills important gaps left by the state law and ensures that all NYC communities are properly counted.</p> <p>它們涵蓋了不同的政府機構和族群：</p> <p>2021年紐約州法律：</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 僅適用於州政府機構。 ● 僅要求針對亞裔、夏威夷原住民和太平洋島民（NHPI）社區收集細分族裔資料。 ● 不影響大多數紐約市機構。 <p>第1134號提案：</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 專門適用於所有紐約市機構。 ● 要求在所有七大種族/族裔類別中收集詳細資料，而不僅限於亞裔、夏威夷原住民和太平洋島民族群。 ● 要求對亞裔社區進行更具包容性的資料收集和報告。 <p>簡而言之，第1134號提案填補了州法律中的重要漏洞，確保紐約市的所有族裔都能被正確統計。</p>
<p>Do any other cities or states have data disaggregation laws? 其他城市或州也有族裔數據分類法嗎？</p>	<p>Yes! Data disaggregation is becoming a national trend as more places recognize its importance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New Jersey (2024): Recently passed a law to collect detailed data on Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) communities and Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) groups. ● Massachusetts (2023): Passed the Data Equity Bill, which collects detailed data across Asian, Pacific Islander, Black, Latino, and White ethnic populations. <p>More cities and states are recognizing that detailed data leads to better services for residents. This growing movement shows that data disaggregation is becoming a standard practice for governments that want to effectively serve their diverse constituencies.</p> <p>NYC has the opportunity to continue leading the</p>

movement by adopting our inclusionary bill, Int 1134.

是的！族裔數據分類正成為一個全國性的趨勢，有越來越多地方意識到其重要性：

● 新澤西州（2024年）：最近通過了一項法律，要求收集有關中東和北非（MENA）族裔以及亞裔美國人和太平洋島民（AAPI）群體的詳細資料。

● 麻薩諸塞州（2023年）：通過了族裔資料公平法案，該法案收集亞裔、太平洋島民、黑人、拉丁裔和白人族裔群體的詳細資料。

越來越多城市和州認識到，詳盡的資料能帶來更優質的居民服務。這一不斷增長的趨勢顯示，族裔數據分類正成為政府有效服務多元選民的標準做法。

採納我們這項具包容性的法案，第1134號提案將使紐約市有機會繼續引領這一運動。

Brooklyn Community Board 1 Testimony

June 16, 2025 City Council Hearing on Community Board Reform

Good afternoon, Chair and Council Members. I am Lloyd Feng, representing Brooklyn Community Board 1, which serves Williamsburg and Greenpoint, where I serve as Chair of the Public Safety and Human Services Committee. I am testifying before you today on behalf of Brooklyn CB1 to share that we carefully reviewed and voted unanimously in favor of the following positions:

We strongly support three bills that address critical operational needs. **Int. 1250** requiring online publication of bylaws aligns perfectly with our board's action earlier this year to provide our bylaws electronically. The **two bills creating support offices - Int. 1314** doing so under borough presidents for legal and HR assistance, and another **Int. 1316** within DCAS for accessible meeting spaces - will provide essential resources our board desperately needs to serve our rapidly growing neighborhoods effectively.

We support with amendments two training-related bills. For **Int. 0472** on EEO training, we recommend exempting NYC agency employees who have already completed required EEO training to avoid redundancy. For **Int. 1318**, we support enhanced member preparation but urge moving the appointment date from August 15th to **July 1st**, giving our district office adequate time to onboard new members and complete required training before they participate in committee work.

We oppose Int. 1315's newsletter and videoconferencing requirements *unless* the Council includes increased funding for community boards that would enable us to staff up and pay for any needed technology and equipment for the provision of such services. Our district office is already stretched thin serving Williamsburg and Greenpoint, which have experienced tremendous population growth, extensive development, and a proliferation of nightlife establishments that have generated numerous complaints and quality of life concerns. This increased volume of work - from development reviews to quality of life issues - has significantly strained our capacity. Without adequate funding, these requirements would be unfunded mandates that compromise our ability to serve our community effectively.

We oppose Int. 1065 establishing four-year district manager terms. This bill undermines community board autonomy by allowing borough presidents to unilaterally remove district managers without cause and appoint their preferred candidates. This creates serious ethical concerns and potential for political interference in community board operations. Community boards must retain authority over their own staff employment decisions. We recognize the immense undertaking in managing a district

office and navigating the labyrinth of city government, skills that develop over many years of service within a single board. In order for a district manager to be fully successful in his or her position, we need to provide him or her the time and opportunity to grow in the position.

To be clear, our board by no means opposes formalizing annual review and performance review processes for the district manager; **we, however, would prefer that Borough Hall and/or City Council provide us with models** of how to best go about structuring, designing, and implementing a professional annual review process for our district manager **consistent with the City Charter's defined hiring and employment oversight authority of the community board.**

Brooklyn CB1 appreciates the Council's commitment to strengthening community boards. However, any reforms must preserve board autonomy while providing the resources necessary for effective implementation. We urge you to consider our recommendations to ensure these bills truly serve the communities we represent.

Thank you, Chair Restler and committee members, for your time and consideration.

Testimony from Jeremy Laufer, District Manager of Brooklyn Community Board 7, to the New York City Council Government Operations Committee – June 16, 2025

Good morning. My name is Jeremy Laufer and I am here today to speak in opposition to the deadline proposed in Intro 1318. I am testifying on my own behalf today, not on behalf of my board, although I do so drawing upon my 25 years of experience as District Manager of Community Board 7 in Brooklyn.

In that time, I have never experienced a year in which appointments were made by the current April 1 deadline. My board has had appointments made as late as the second week of June. We have had appointments and removals on the day of a Board Meeting where we had ULURP votes. I agree that the current April 1 date does not work, simply because it is in the middle of a term and it is nearly impossible to train new members on board protocol and issues before us in time for new members to be active and productive members from the beginning of their term. That puts boards at a disadvantage as new members tend to abstain from complicated issues until they get better acclimated, making achieving a majority vote more difficult.

With regard to the proposed August 15 deadline, this leaves Community Boards in a similar position as these appointments would be made near the end of the summer, with little chance to meet, train and assign committees to new members. This year some boards' September meeting falls on the 8th, barely 3 weeks after this appointment date, with the last two weeks of summer, the start of a new school year and Labor Day in between.

I am concerned that a "deadline" without consequence, as we currently have, also leaves boards at the mercy of late appointments, further complicating a September board meeting.

I understand that this bill was written in consultation with the Brooklyn Borough President and this deadline does seem advantageous for Borough Presidents, pushing the appointment date out until almost the very end of the summer, but this does not resolve the problem of preparing our board members for service, as I have pointed out.

Community Board District Managers have different ideas on the best date, although I believe there is strong consensus for something other than April 1. I have and continue to argue that July 1 would be the best possible date for our resource poor Community Boards to prepare our new members. Community Board 7 has an introductory meeting for new members, distributes a member handbook specific to our board and has a question-and-answer session for members. We do our committee assignments over the summer have time to prepare all our members for big issues that arise in the three months between full board meetings. I would posit that the August 15 deadline puts us in a similar position to where we are now. In fact, a lead of two months of summer would allow time for members to take their trainings without overlapping with committee meetings.

I'd also like to take a moment to stand with my colleagues calling for a significant non-salary budget increase for community boards, something our agencies have not seen in my 25 years as District Manager. The job has changed significantly in that time, particularly major changes in technology. My board still worked on typewriters when I started. We had to scale back our staff in order to properly equip our office. Our budget has never been increased in a meaningful way in that time to allow us to

handle increased responsibilities and technology. A budget increase, in my mind, would have the most positive impact of any action the City Council could take.



COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

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Antonio Reynoso
Borough President

Irsa Weatherspoon
Chairperson

Michelle T. George
District Manager

June 18, 2025

Honorable Lincoln Restler, Chair
New York City Council
Committee on Governmental Operations,
State & Federal Legislation
250 Broadway
New York, N.Y. 10007

Re: Oversight: Community Boards Resources and Support

Councilmember Restler,

My name is Irsa Weatherspoon, and I am the Chairperson of Brooklyn Community Board 8. I have been a proud member of the Board since 2014 and have served as Chairperson since 2021. I submit these comments in response to the City Council's oversight hearing on *Community Boards Resources and Support*, specifically regarding the proposed legislative introductions (Intros).

Brooklyn Community Board 8 represents the vibrant central Brooklyn neighborhoods of Crown Heights North, Prospect Heights, and Weeksville. Our 50 volunteer board members are tasked with addressing the needs of approximately 140,000 residents. The work of our board would not be possible without the dedicated support of our district office staff, who serve as the operational backbone of our efforts.

Our District Manager, Michelle George, has been employed at Brooklyn Community Board 8 for over 30 years, serving in her current role for the past 16 years. Her institutional knowledge, long-standing relationships, and deep understanding of the district are invaluable assets to our board and our community. For this reason, I strongly oppose Intro 1065, which would limit the tenure of Community Board District Managers to four years with the ability to be reappointed in four-year blocks. Such a restriction would be a significant disservice to the stability and effectiveness of community boards across the city.

Over the years, Ms. George has built and sustained trusted relationships with city agencies, elected officials, community-based organizations, local police and fire departments, sanitation and postal workers, business owners, school administrators, faith-based leaders, and thousands of

the district's residents. This network of collaboration and trust cannot be easily created or strongly maintained—especially not within a four-year window.

The potential harm of Intro 1065 becomes even more evident when considered alongside the upcoming 2027 term limits for Community Board members, which are expected to result in the loss of up to half of board membership citywide. The simultaneous turnover of both leadership and institutional knowledge poses a serious risk to the continuity and effectiveness of community boards.

District Managers currently serve at the pleasure of their respective boards, which have the authority to take action if a manager is underperforming. Transferring the power to remove District Managers to Borough Presidents would undermine the autonomy and non-political nature of community boards, and could risk politicizing these crucial administrative roles.

While I support regular evaluations and accountability for District Managers, I **cannot support Intro 1065 in its current form**. I respectfully urge the Council to reconsider the unintended consequences this legislation may have on the long-term strength, independence, and functionality of community boards.

Int. No. 472: Training for Community Board Members – Currently, only district office staff and chairpersons are required to undergo training. I fully support expanding this requirement so that all Community Board members receive training provided by the Borough Presidents' Offices. It is essential that every member is educated on anti-sexual harassment and anti-discrimination laws to help prevent violations and to promote a respectful, inclusive, and safe environment for all who participate in community board activities.

Int. No. 1075: Borough Presidents to provide trainings on legislative processes and parliamentary procedures. I fully support the Borough Presidents' Offices in providing training for Community Board members. It is essential that all members have a strong understanding of legislative processes and parliamentary procedures as well as conflicts of interests. I also support making these trainings mandatory to ensure that every member is equipped with the knowledge and tools necessary to serve effectively, responsibly, and in the best interest of the community.

Int. No. 1250: Publication of bylaws by borough boards, community boards and advisory bodies. I am genuinely perplexed by Int. No. 1250. The City Charter already states that community boards must make their by-laws and statements available for *reasonable public inspection*. I strongly believe this means by-laws should be provided upon request not automatically published on websites.

For comparison, private entities such as Citibank do not make their by-laws publicly available online; they are issued upon request. Similarly, community board by-laws should be accessible through formal channels, such as a Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) request, to maintain a balance between transparency and proper procedure.

Int. No. 1315: Require Community Boards to email a monthly newsletter and videoconference their meetings and hearing. Under the leadership of the District Manager, Brooklyn Community

Board 8 has implemented aspects of this practice since 2010. The office regularly uses a digital platform to distribute a weekly newsletter with news and updates to our community. However, videoconferencing our meetings and hearings remains a significant challenge for us.

There are three primary barriers that prevent us from fully complying with this proposed requirement:

1. **Lack of a Dedicated Meeting Space** – Unlike some boards, CB8 does not have a permanent meeting location. Our meetings are held at different venues throughout the district each month, which complicates consistent technology setup.
2. **Unreliable Internet Access** – Many of the locations we use do not have reliable Wi-Fi, making it difficult—if not impossible—to support live videoconferencing.
3. **Limited Staffing** – CB8 operates with just two staff members: the District Manager and a Community Coordinator. Both are responsible for managing multiple tasks during meetings and hearings, making it challenging to handle the additional technical responsibilities of livestreaming and virtual participation.

Finally, with our already limited budget, we are unable to hire outside vendors to support these functions. Without increased funding and resources, fulfilling this requirement would place an undue burden on our board.

Int. 1318: Community Board member training, appointment dates and qualifications. I support this bill, as it ensures that newly appointed Community Board members receive the proper training necessary to effectively carry out their civic responsibilities.

I also agree with the proposal to change the current appointment date. As it stands, new members are appointed in May, which presents challenges for Community Board 8—particularly in odd-numbered years when officer elections are held. New members often do not have the institutional knowledge needed to make informed decisions during these critical votes.

We recommend that the appointment date be changed to **July 1st**, rather than the proposed **August 15th**. A July 1st appointment would provide Community Boards with adequate time over the summer to conduct orientations and training sessions, ensuring that new members are well-prepared and informed before the new meeting cycle begins in September.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on these important issues.

Sincerely,

Irsa Weatherspoon
Chairperson



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June 18, 2025

Honorable Lincoln Restler, Chair
New York City Council
Committee on Governmental Operations,
State & Federal Legislation
250 Broadway
New York, N.Y. 10007

Re: Oversight: Community Boards Resources and Support

Dear Councilmember Restler and members of the Committee on Governmental Operations:

After attending Monday's public hearing on *Oversight: Community Boards Resources and Support*, I would like to submit the following comments regarding the legislative introductions (Intros) that were discussed.

Int. No. 472: Training for Community Board Members - I fully support the Borough Presidents' Offices providing training for Community Board members. It is essential that all members receive education on anti-sexual harassment and anti-discrimination laws to help prevent violations and to foster a respectful, inclusive environment for all.

In addition, this training helps align members' understanding of their responsibilities with that of the district office staff, promoting a cohesive and collaborative working environment that supports effective board performance.

Int. 1065: Term of Employment for District Managers – I have been employed at Community Board 8 for 36 years and have served as District Manager for the past 16 years. I am writing to express my strong opposition to Int. 1065.

Limiting the term of Community Board District Managers to four years would be a significant disservice to the stability and effectiveness of community boards. District Managers like myself bring decades of institutional knowledge and deep-rooted relationships that are essential to the functioning of our neighborhoods. If this bill passes, that valuable experience would be lost. Moreover, comments made by some of your colleagues suggesting that the knowledge gap between District Managers and Chairpersons should be addressed by diminishing the role or influence of District Managers are deeply concerning. At best, such remarks are misguided; at

worst, they are dismissive and undermining of the vital role District Managers play in supporting the effectiveness of Community Boards.

An experienced and knowledgeable District Manager should be recognized and valued as an asset—not viewed as a liability. Their expertise strengthens the board, enhances institutional memory, and supports informed decision-making. Efforts to minimize their contributions risk destabilizing the very structure that enables Community Boards to serve their communities effectively.

In my role over the years, I have developed close working relationships with city agencies, elected officials, police officers, firefighters, sanitation and postal workers, as well as local residents, business owners, school leaders, community-based organization, block associations, and faith-based organizations amongst a much longer list. This network of trust and collaboration cannot be easily replaced or rebuilt every four years, nor should it be unnecessarily weakened due to uncertainty or insecurity surrounding the role.

The proposed term limit would be particularly destabilizing when combined with the upcoming 2027 term limits for Community Board members, which will result in many boards losing half their membership. The potential loss of both experienced District Managers and a large portion of board members at the same time is deeply concerning. Community Boards need consistent, knowledgeable, and reliable leadership to effectively manage the day-to-day operations of the district office and advocate for the community.

Furthermore, this bill appears to be both redundant and unnecessary, as existing structures and processes already address the concerns it aims to resolve because District Managers currently serve at the discretion of their boards. If a manager is underperforming or no longer fit for the role, the board already has the authority to take appropriate action. Shifting the power to remove District Managers to the Borough Presidents undermines the independence of Community Boards and it raises concerns about the potential for increased politicization of these important roles, especially at a time when there is growing sensitivity around how volunteer board appointments are made and the perception that political alignment may play an outsized role.

While I support the idea of fair evaluation processes for District Managers and staff, I cannot support Int. 1065 in its current form. I urge you to reconsider the unintended consequences this bill may have on the strength and continuity of our community leadership. Additionally, I encourage you to collaborate closely with community board staff—including the very district managers this legislation seeks to limit—before drafting new proposals for review.

Int. No. 1075: Borough Presidents to provide trainings on legislative processes and parliamentary procedures. I fully support the Borough Presidents' Offices in providing training for Community Board members. It is essential that all members are well-versed in legislative processes and parliamentary procedures. I also support making these trainings mandatory to ensure that every board member is properly equipped with the knowledge needed to serve effectively and responsibly

Int. No. 1134: Race and Ethnicity data collected by agencies. I fully support this bill requiring agencies, whether directly or through contracted services to expand race and ethnicity options on demographic data collection forms. Accurate and inclusive data is essential for the City to equitably allocate resources and effectively serve all communities across New York City.

Int. No. 1250: Publication of bylaws by borough boards, community boards and advisory bodies. I am genuinely perplexed by Int. No. 1250. The City Charter already states that community boards must make their by-laws and statements available for *reasonable public inspection*. I strongly believe this means by-laws should be provided upon request not automatically published on websites.

For comparison, private entities such as Citibank do not make their by-laws publicly available online; they are issued upon request. Similarly, community board by-laws should be accessible through formal channels, such as a Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) request, to maintain a balance between transparency and proper procedure.

Int. No. 1314: Borough Presidents to establish and maintain an office to assist community boards by providing legal, information technology, community planning and human resources support. The Brooklyn Borough President's Office already provides some valuable support to community boards, and I believe this should be expanded to include dedicated information technology and legal services. IT support is especially critical, as the Office of Technology & Innovation currently has only one staff member assigned to assist all 59 community boards citywide. Expanding these resources would significantly enhance the ability of community boards to function effectively and meet the needs of their districts.

Int. No. 1315: Require Community Boards to email a monthly newsletter and videoconference their meetings and hearing. Brooklyn Community Board 8 has implemented aspects of this practice since 2010. We regularly use a digital platform to distribute a weekly newsletter with news and updates to our community. However, videoconferencing our meetings and hearings remains a significant challenge for us.

There are three primary barriers that prevent us from fully complying with this proposed requirement:

1. **Lack of a Dedicated Meeting Space** – Unlike some boards, CB8 does not have a permanent meeting location. Our meetings are held at different venues throughout the district each month, which complicates consistent technology setup.
2. **Unreliable Internet Access** – Many of the locations we use do not have reliable Wi-Fi, making it difficult—if not impossible—to support live streaming, let alone videoconferencing.
- 3.
4. **Limited Staffing** – CB8 operates with just two staff members: the District Manager and a Community Coordinator. Both are responsible for managing multiple tasks during

meetings and hearings, making it challenging to handle the additional technical responsibilities of livestreaming and virtual participation.

Finally, with our already limited budget, we are unable to hire outside vendors to support these functions. Without increased funding and resources, fulfilling this requirement would place an undue burden on our board.

Int.1316: Establishing an Office of Community Board Support with the department of Citywide Administrative Services. This new office would be a valuable complement to the existing Real Estate Unit, as it would provide additional resources and support to community boards.

Int. 1318: Community Board member training, appointment dates and qualifications. I support this bill with conditions, as it aims to ensure that newly appointed Community Board members receive the proper training needed to fulfill their civic responsibilities effectively. In my experience, individuals who regularly attend Community Board meetings prior to their appointment tend to become more informed and engaged members, entering their roles with a clear understanding of and respect for the responsibilities their membership entails. For that reason, I also support expanding this requirement to include mandatory attendance at several meetings of both full Board and a committee before an individual is eligible for appointment.

Additionally, agreement is present with the proposal to change the appointment date. Under the current schedule, new members are appointed around May, with us notifying them of their first meeting generally within (sometimes less than) a week of the meeting date. This presents challenges for Community Board 8, particularly in odd-numbered years when we hold officer elections. At that time, new members often lack the institutional knowledge necessary to make informed decisions when voting. Moreover, toward the end of the year, our Community Board typically faces a heavier slate of public hearings and action items than in other months. This makes it challenging for new members to vote effectively on critical issues, as they often lack the necessary knowledge, experience, and familiarity with the topics. For example, key votes such as the *City of Yes for Housing Opportunity* in May and June 2024, and the reaffirmation of support for the *Atlantic Avenue Mixed Use Plan (AAMUP)* in May 2025, require a deep understanding that new members may not yet possess. Many have not had the opportunity to attend relevant committee meetings, are unfamiliar with technical acronyms, and can feel overwhelmed by the fast pace of discussions.

Consequently—and why my support for this Intro is conditional—I recommend changing the appointment date to **July 1st** rather than the proposed August 15th. A July 1st appointment would provide Community Boards with valuable time over the summer to conduct orientations and training sessions, ensuring that new members are well-prepared before the new meeting cycle begins in September. If the goal of this Intro is to create a more seamless and effective onboarding process, allowing two full months for training and addressing members' questions before they are fully engaged is a far better approach than immediately placing them in the deep end.

Lastly, please be reminded that Community Boards have not received baseline budget increases in over 20 years. Despite this, we are expected to accomplish more with fewer resources. The

district office serves as the central hub for the information Community Board members rely on to make informed decisions on critical issues such as outdoor dining, cannabis regulation, land use and zoning, parks, and transportation among many others. Additionally, the office oversees service delivery, processes complaints, and manages a wide range of responsibilities. These tasks can be especially challenging for boards with limited staff. For instance, Brooklyn Community Board 8 operates with only two full-time staff members, making it difficult to fulfill our charter-mandated duties without great strain and the potential for burnout for the two of us. Even routine tasks, like processing payments, require three levels of approval, compelling us to depend heavily on the Borough President's office for assistance—sometimes with resistance from their office. I strongly believe it is time for a baseline budget increase, which would enable us to hire additional staff, modernize our outdated offices, and invest in the technology and equipment necessary to meet the needs of an evolving membership, conduct effective hybrid meetings, and align our operations with other city agencies.

Thank you for your attention to the vital resources and support needed by the city's 59 Community Boards. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any additional information or clarification.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michelle George". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michelle" and last name "George" clearly distinguishable.

Michelle George
District Manager



BROOKLYN COMMUNITY BOARD 14
FLATBUSH-MIDWOOD COMMUNITY DISTRICT
810 East 16th Street
Brooklyn, New York 11230

Dear Chair Restler, members of the committee and New York City councilmembers at large,

My name is Shawn Alyse Campbell and I serve as the District Manager for Brooklyn Community Board 14. Thank you for the opportunity to submit the following testimony in reference to Intros pending in city council that relate to community boards.

Community Boards are independent non-mayoral city agencies. Community Boards are not a unit or department or function of any other agency or any office of an elected official. While tasked as advisory bodies on proposals, permits, events and applications, the overriding responsibility of a community board is to be the fulcrum between the distinct district borders and every city agency. It is therefore of utmost importance that the independence of community boards be preserved, and the functions of community boards be supported with an adequate budget that is pegged to inflation and the growth of all other city agencies and elected offices.

The intros being considered by the Committee on Governmental Operations, State and Federal Legislation overlook and threaten to undermine our independence and do not address our baseline resource needs.

Specifically:

Int 0472-2024 Name: Requiring the borough presidents to provide equal employment opportunity trainings to community board members. Title: A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to requiring the borough presidents to provide equal employment opportunity trainings to community board members.

Brooklyn CB14 testimony: This intro is unclear. It is one thing to require the Borough Presidents to provide training. However, if the intent is to require board members to avail themselves of the training upon appointment, that should be stated. It might be most efficient to require DCAS to simply make the training videos accessible and require that board members submit their certificate to their respective Borough Halls within a timeframe after appointment.

Int. No. 1065 Bill Title: A Local Law to amend the New York city charter, in relation to the terms of employment for district managers. Bill Summary: This bill would limit the term of community board district managers to four years, with the possibility of re-appointment, and provide borough presidents with the power to remove district managers at will.

Brooklyn CB14 testimony: This intro disregards the autonomy of community boards and is antithetical to the NYC Charter. District Managers already serve at the pleasure of their boards. For example, CB14 is directed by its own bylaws to review the performance of the District Manager annually.

The idea that an elected official can fire the staff of another independent city agency is unprecedented and contrary to the city charter. By design and virtue, community board positions will sometimes oppose those of the borough presidents. The BP is tasked with furthering the interest of the borough as a whole. The community board is hyper local. Sometimes a plan has broad and diffuse benefits that require an imposition on a particular neighborhood. It is the responsibility of community boards to raise the hyper local concerns. Sometimes it might result in a community benefits agreement, a compromise or change. Other times, there

cannot be a change but at least the downside has been considered in the pursuit of the upside. This is a healthy debate. Borough Presidents have been known to remove board members when an issue is controversial. That's unfortunate. However, for them to have the additional power to remove staff carrying out the wishes of a board and the community at large is undemocratic and would render the positions of DM to patronage posts. This proposal should be withdrawn entirely.

Int. No. 1134 Bill Title: A Local Law to amend the New York city charter, in relation to race and ethnicity data collected by agencies. Bill Summary: This bill would require agencies that collect demographic information from individuals through form documents to include additional race and ethnicity options.

Brooklyn CB14 testimony: This bill does not seem pertinent to community boards. We do not appoint board members and cannot be held responsible for the demographic composition of our boards. CB14 has five overlapping council members who nominate half of the board members, who are then all appointed by the borough presidents. It is unknown whether the council members collect demographic data to inform their nominations. To the extent that we have asked Brooklyn Borough Hall to share this information and have offered support to increase applications from underrepresented groups in our district, we have been denied. If this bill also supports sharing demographic information collected by council or borough presidents for the purpose of ensuring a representative board, we would favor it.

Int. No. 1250 Bill Title: A Local Law to amend the New York city charter, in relation to publication of bylaws by borough boards, community boards, and advisory bodies. Bill Summary: This bill would require every community board, borough board or advisory body to publish in a searchable, non-proprietary and machine-readable format, their by-laws, and update such published by-laws no later than two weeks after any changes are made.

Brooklyn CB14 testimony: This seems duplicative, at least as it pertains to community boards. We are already required to post our respective bylaws and have in fact been audited to ensure compliance. Otherwise, no objection.

T2025-3330 Name: Requiring community boards to email a monthly newsletter and videoconference their meetings and hearings. Title: A Local Law to amend the New York city charter, in relation to requiring community boards to email a monthly newsletter and videoconference their meetings and hearings.

Brooklyn CB14 testimony: Community Board 14 publishes a monthly newsletter, which is a cost. We use a less-than-optimal service because if we limit the number of mailings, it is free. We video conference our meetings via Webex. Webex is less than optimal but it is free. We invested in equipment for our board office in the year that this committee provided us with a \$42,500 allotment. This equipment enables CB14 to livestream smaller meetings from our district office. The quality is not optimal, but we cannot upgrade equipment with our current budget. For off-site meetings we record and livestream using a provider, Harisch Studios. Annually the total for these services is over \$5000 and we expect those costs to rise.

Please support a baseline budget increase for these activities, especially if you plan to mandate them.

T2025-3396 Name: Requiring borough presidents to establish and maintain an office to assist community boards by providing legal, information technology, community planning, and human resources support. Title: A Local Law to amend the New York city charter, in relation to requiring borough presidents to establish and maintain an office to assist community boards by providing legal, information technology, community planning, and human resources support. Summary: This bill would require each Borough President to establish and maintain an office to assist community boards by providing legal, information technology, community planning, and human resources support.

Brooklyn CB14 testimony: The offices of Borough Presidents currently provide some of these support functions. Some are assigned by the charter, others are practices developed over time. This is a proposal that

could use further consideration and clarification. For instance, the City Law Department is also a resource for legal guidance that might be more efficient than five different borough halls being responsible for legal advice to 59 boards. Clearly, it might depend on the matter. What if the legal matter is between a borough hall and a community board? Support for information technology is most usually sought from OTI. Community planning capacity is afforded directly to the boards through the city charter, which notes that each board should have a planner. Certainly, a baseline budget increase would enable boards to hire a planner, or a planning consultant as needed and would ensure each board's autonomy in planning considerations. While some outside administrative support is necessary and valued, the emphasis of resource distribution should be on the community boards themselves. In other words, increase the baseline budgets for community boards to help them increase administrative, planning and functional capacity while also underscoring the autonomy of community boards.

T2025-3605 Name: Establishing an office of community board support within the department of citywide administrative services. Title: A Local Law to amend the New York city charter, in relation to establishing an office of community board support within the department of citywide administrative services. Summary: This bill would establish the Office of Community Board Support within the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS). This office would be required to assist community boards with finding accessible public meeting spaces and permanent office spaces. The office would also be required to conduct regular assessments regarding the physical needs of community board offices and help with any repairs or upgrades needed to the offices.

Brooklyn CB14 testimony: This seems duplicative. DCAS requires a CB district office survey annually, navigates lease renewals and has provided this support for CB14 in the past. In addition, many CB offices are in city-owned buildings under DCAS purview. Otherwise, no objection.

T2025-3608 Name: Community board member training, appointment dates, and qualifications. Title: A Local Law to amend the New York city charter, in relation to community board member training, appointment dates, and qualifications. Summary: This bill would require each Borough President to provide training for newly appointed community board members who have not previously served as community board members. The bill would also change the appointment date for community board members from April 1 to August 15 and would add a requirement for an individual to have attended a community board meeting prior to their appointment to a community board.

Brooklyn CB14 testimony: Training responsibilities seem to already be in the city charter as per Chapter 4, Section 82, 12. "Provide training and technical assistance to the members of community boards within the borough." Perhaps this could be tightened up to require that the training be provided by staff outside of the borough president's office to address any appearance of influencing points of view. The change in appointment date seems positive in that it would allow the current slate to finish out a fiscal year. The requirement to attend a community board meeting is unclear. Does this mean a regular monthly meeting of the board or a committee meeting? Is it necessary to require attendance when recordings of all meetings are posted on the board's website? These are merely questions for consideration. Otherwise, CB14 has no objection to this intro.

It is important that you take note of the proposals that would impose further on community boards' resources and address the already constrained CB budgets. No matter what happens with any of these intros, please raise the community board's baseline budgets this year by at least \$50,000 each and tie future year increases to a logical anchor.

Thank you.

Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation
Oversight Hearing on Community Board Resources and Support
June 16, 2025

Thank you for your interest in supporting Community Boards and scheduling this hearing today. As you know, Community Boards are the most local level of government and provide a neighborhood-level civic infrastructure for addressing quality of life concerns and local issues. Our offices typically have staff of two or three employees to handle all personnel, fiscal, and charter-mandated responsibilities to coordinate the delivery of city services in our Districts.

I would like to voice my support for Introduction 1250-2025. If you walk around many areas of the south and central Bronx, you will see issues that require the city's attention. Community Boards work with their local agencies to coordinate delivery of services and resolve issues like trash, street maintenance, and public safety concerns. Unfortunately, oversight on service delivery does not happen at the Borough level at the Bronx Borough Board or Borough Cabinet. Borough Board currently meets to hear presentations from agencies on new programs – members are talked at for an hour and have limited ability to ask questions. There are numerous ways in which the Bronx Borough Board does not uphold its responsibilities as described in the city charter. We do not have publicly available bylaws, and my requests for those bylaws have never been answered. We do not review service statements from agencies, we do not prepare a comprehensive statement of expense and capital budget priorities for the borough, no public notice of our meetings is made, and no minutes are kept. With the passage of Intro 1250, we would be able to clearly identify how to resolve these shortcomings using bylaws. The process of developing bylaws would allow for the Borough President, Council Members, and Community Boards to come to an agreement on how we can cooperate to improve the delivery of city services in our Borough.

I would like to voice my support for Introduction 1314-2025. Typically, Borough President's offices have personnel budgets between 5 and 6 million dollars a year. The level of support provided by these offices to Community Boards varies widely by borough. This inconsistency in support means that in some boroughs the Boards are assisted by the BP, and others like the Bronx, we are told that we are independent agencies and our HR, EEO, legal, IT, and planning issues are our own. This creates significant complications, because our payroll and onboarding functions are handled by the Borough President's offices, and our Board members are appointed by the Borough Presidents (in consultation with the City Council).

The Bronx Borough President's office believes that Community Boards are independent agencies, and either ignores our requests for assistance, tells us they will not assist, or hinders our ability to operate when they intervene. For example, the Bronx BP refuses to assist with HR issues arising from Board members appointed by the BP. I filed an EEO complaint 7 months ago, and the BP's office never forwarded it to my Board Chair. The BP's office refuses to engage with Boards in a meaningful way on reappointments and new appointments on our Boards. The Law Department advised me to have the BP's office provide input on my employee manual, and the BP's office refused to provide input. The Bronx BP's office delayed the resolution of a personnel issue for several weeks by delaying my communications with the Law Department and Office of Labor Relations. CB6 can only bring in planning fellows on a seasonal basis, while the BP's

office has full-time planners. All 59 Community Boards are competing for the attention of one employee at OTI and three employees at OMB who are our liaisons. Codifying BP's role as the support for Community Boards would clearly delineate that these responsibilities are not up to the whim of the Borough President to deny to Community Boards. In light of the new responsibilities for Community Boards created by the other bills being heard today, more support will be needed.

Thank you for your attention,

Rafael Moure-Punnett
District Manager
Bronx Community Board #6



BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 8

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Julie Reyes, **Chairperson**

Vanessa L. Gibson, **Bronx Borough President**

Farrah Kule Rubin, **District Manager**

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Special Committee on Hudson River Greenway

Bob Bender

Special Committee on Racial Equity

Margaret Della

Special Committee on Veterans' Services

Sergio Villaverde

NYC Council Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation **Hearing on Community Boards Resources and Support June 16, 2025**

Thank you Chair Restler and Members of the Committee on Governmental Operations for holding this hearing on how we can better support our Community Boards.

Community Boards are comprised of advocates who selflessly volunteer their time to ensure that their neighborhoods are the best they can be. We work autonomously to advocate and create additional By-Laws that specifically work for our district. The District Manager supports our board members with only 2 City employees, including herself.

Community Boards are independent City agencies. Respecting our autonomy is a crucial component of our local democracy.

Bronx Community Board 8 Executive committee reviewed and discussed the reform bills on June 16, 2025. Below are our positions on these bills:

Intro 1065-2024:

Creating term limits for District Managers, and granting Borough Presidents the authority to remove them, undermines the stability, independence, and effectiveness of local leadership. Imposing District Manager term limits introduces unnecessary turnover and disruption to community boards (whose governing members are already term limited) and hinders the long-term planning and implementation needs of the district. Further, District Managers are best positioned to support community boards without fear of political interference or arbitrary removal. Concentrating the removal powers of a community board employee with the Office of the Borough President, a separate City agency that is not involved in the hiring procedure, is unprecedented and invites otherwise avoidable legal, procedural, and ethical complications. Preserving the autonomy of community boards, and with it the stability of the District Manager role, encourages more transparent, accountable, and responsible community representation. For the reasons provided herein, we oppose Intro 1065-2024.

Intro 3330:

Most boards do not have the staff capacity to incorporate monthly newsletters into their already heavily mandated administrative duties, while we do quarterly newsletters, to mandate a monthly one would be very onerous on our already overtaxed staff. We also post notices daily on our social media and email outreach and keep our community well informed.

Bronx Community Board 8 video conferences, most but not all of, our meetings where possible. We work very hard to find meeting spaces to accommodate all residents of our district and go to each neighborhood to give access to our meetings. Again, to mandate all meetings at all meeting spaces is not feasible. Some spaces cannot accommodate this and lack Wi-Fi capabilities. It is very costly to provide the technical needs for videoconferencing, which we spend a good portion of our budget on. There is no financial support mentioned in this bill. We would need adequate funding for additional staff and technology.

Intro 0472:

We do support requiring Borough Presidents to provide Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) trainings to Community Board members but need coordination between the Borough President and DCAS who already provide trainings to the NYC Employees on staff.

Intro 3608:

We conditionally support changing the appointment date for Community Board members but ask to do it earlier, as of July 1st, so we have time to plan our training and update our records before our meetings start again in September. We also support any targeted training that can be provided by the Borough President to new and current members and support the bills providing for our operational needs, legal assistance and HR assistance.

In closing, Community Boards require increased funding to support the many functions it is mandated to carry out. Adding more mandates without funding to support it is unrealistic.

Thank you for your consideration of our positions and suggestions on this legislation.

Respectfully,

Julie Reyes

Julie Reyes
Chairperson, Bronx Community Board 8

Farrah Kule Rubin

Farrah Kule Rubin
District Manager Bronx Community Board 8

Testimony of Julio Quiñones Jr., Bronx Community Board 9 Member
Submitted to: New York City Council Committee on Governmental Operations, State and
Federal Legislation
Date: June 16, 2025
Subject: Oversight: Community Boards Resources and Support

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF COMMUNITY BOARD REFORMS

My name is Julio Quiñones Jr., a member of Bronx Community Board 9 and an elementary physical education teacher serving the same youth and families that community boards are meant to uplift. I see firsthand how policy, planning, and participation intersect, and I appreciate the opportunity to submit this written testimony in follow-up to my oral statement at the June 16th hearing.

Community boards shape so much of daily life in our neighborhoods, from the safety of our streets to youth programs to the allocation of resources. But without proper support, boards cannot function equitably or effectively.

That's why I strongly support the legislative package under consideration, particularly:

Int. 1065 (Williams) – to require Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) training for all community board members.

Int. 1066 (Williams) – to standardize the appointment and reappointment process for District Managers, helping to modernize and ensure fairness.

Int. 1075 (Farías) – to provide legislative training for board members so we can better understand and shape the policy work before us.

Int. 1250 (Carr) – to require community board bylaws be made publicly accessible, improving transparency.

Int. 1314, 1315, 1316 & 1318 (Restler) – to create support offices within Borough Presidents' offices and DCAS, to standardize hybrid meeting access, and to streamline the application process to encourage broader participation.

I want to thank Councilmember Rafael Salamanca Jr. for allocating \$310,000 to Bronx boards for critical technology upgrades. That investment is evidence that advocacy works. However, these were one-time capital investments. Community boards still need permanent infrastructure, including dedicated tech support, translation services, hybrid meeting equipment, and ongoing training to function equitably.

Testimony of Julio Quiñones Jr., Bronx Community Board 9 Member
Submitted to: New York City Council Committee on Governmental Operations, State and
Federal Legislation
Date: June 16, 2025
Subject: Oversight: Community Boards Resources and Support

I also want to acknowledge and thank Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson for her continued commitment to our boards, including through the creation of the Bronx Youth Council. As an educator, I believe it is crucial that we expand structured opportunities for youth participation in community boards through advisory roles, internships, or school partnerships. Early civic engagement builds lifelong habits of leadership and accountability.

Furthermore, I urge the Council to ensure:

- Hybrid access is a standard expectation for all community board meetings.
- Ongoing development and capacity-building for District Managers, board chairs, and committee leads.
- Operational equity across boroughs, so that lower-resourced boards are not left behind.

Community boards are often the first to hear the frustrations of our residents and the last to receive the support required to address them. Investing in full-time staffing such as planners, constituent service coordinators, and accessibility liaisons is essential to transforming boards from symbolic spaces into engines of participatory democracy.

These legislative proposals are not just paperwork, they are blueprints for stronger, more representative, and better-resourced community boards. I respectfully urge the Council to pass this package with the funding and implementation fidelity necessary to realize its full promise.

Thank you again for the opportunity to contribute to this important conversation.

Respectfully submitted,

Julio Quiñones Jr.

Bronx Community Board 9

Juliojr.quinones@gmail.com

Good morning, my name is George Torres, and I am the District Manager for Community Board 12. I have served as the District Manager since August 2015. I am here to talk about Intro. 3330 and other pieces of legislation aimed at providing more training for Board Members.

I will speak about my experiences and challenges with the requirements set forth in this legislation. There was much consternation amongst my colleagues with the requirement to provide a monthly newsletter. I am hoping that the authors of this legislation did not mean literally a newsletter instead of what we do provide, which is a calendar of upcoming meetings with an agenda. I read the text of this legislation to mean a calendar of meeting notices with agendas. My concern lies with meeting this obligation, my Board Members are not employees of the Community Board and therefore not constrained to timelines. My By-Laws already state that agendas and meeting notifications are sent one week prior to the meetings. We are not meeting this obligation. State Open Meeting Law requires 72-hour notification for meetings, and we are meeting that requirement. Imposing a one-month in advance notification might be an unintended burden for Community Boards to meet.

When I arrived at Community Board 12, I set out to broadcast our meetings to as many people as we could. I worked with Bronxnet, our Public Access television provider in the Bronx, to broadcast our General Full Board Meetings. This came with additional costs for my Board to produce and broadcast our meetings on public access television. That cost burden grew with each year to a point where we could no longer sustain using Bronxnet to produce our meetings. We were able to find a cheaper alternative however we still had to pay Bronxnet for the connection to use their channel. When Covid hit and we were forced to pivot to video conferencing, it was a seamless transition as many of our Board Members became acclimated to watching on tv when they could not be live in-person. Community Board 12 has remained hybrid since returning to the office and we continue to broadcast through Bronxnet using a YouTube link. We no longer pay Bronxnet for use of their channels.

I am fortunate that I have a permanent site to host all my meetings within my office space. My colleagues are not as lucky, and do not have a suitable permanent site to host their meetings. The task of finding locations large enough to host a meeting is difficult. Finding a space that has the necessary technological accoutrements of this bill makes that task more difficult and limiting. Moreover, it would require Community Board staff to start lugging around computers and cameras to telecast our meetings. Also, it might require us to possess an understanding of technology we do not currently have.

One of the reasons broadcasting with Bronxnet was costly was because of the effort needed to produce a meeting of 50 Board Members. It is not dissimilar to everything laid out in this hearing, we need microphones, cameras, a sound board and enough cables to connect everything. Not to mention the staff with technical expertise to use the cameras and sound board to ensure a quality production. Mandating Community Boards to do this for every meeting would require a near herculean effort we are not equipped to do. A possible solution is for the franchisees, like Bronxnet, that are

awarded the contracts by the City via the office of the Borough President for cable providers like Optimum and Spectrum to have the exclusive rights to provide cable and telecommunication services in the five boroughs.

The challenge with telecasting our meetings is that Board Members do not want to come in-person to meetings. Obtaining in-person quorum has been difficult with our hybrid meetings. We have been told by the State Committee on Open Government that *“Absent a quorum, a public body has no authority to conduct a meeting, regardless of intent, or lack thereof, to vote or take action.”* Yet, this is what happens at all my committee meetings. When I bring this to the attention of my Board Members, they shrug their shoulders, and we keep on meeting. I have yet to find a solution to this problem. The lack of accountability in attendance and in-person requirements makes it difficult to function properly as a public body.

I would be remiss if I did not speak to all the legislation requiring additional trainings for Board Members on EEO and parliamentary procedures is mostly welcoming. I believe most of my colleagues are supportive of this effort. I would say that many of my Board Members are also supportive of this effort. More training would empower Board Members by giving them the confidence to speak up during meetings. We are a year away from term limits for Board Members and anything we can do to have more productive meetings is a good thing. The only change I would suggest is that these training courses be required of all Board Members prior to their appointment to the Community Board, like a prerequisite class at school and that it be required on a yearly basis.

Finally, I end my testimony by making a request for more funding. Much of this legislation would be possible if we had the resources to implement it. This request is not just for Community Boards. The Borough President’s Office and other agencies will need more money to carry out these mandates. **I would ask that you start by providing modest increases to our budgets on a yearly basis so we can plan accordingly.**

Thank you for the opportunity to offer my testimony. I hope it is helpful as you move forward with this legislation.

Public Testimony Before The
Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal
Legislation
On The Topic Of
Oversight - Community Boards Resources and Support
June 16, 2025
Presented By Tammy Meltzer
Chair of Manhattan Community Board 1

Thank you Chair Restler and members of the Committee on Governmental Operations, State and Federal Legislation for the opportunity to testify at this oversight hearing and on the bills proposed here today. My name is Tammy Meltzer and I am the Chair of Manhattan's Community Board 1, representing Lower Manhattan.

Since 2014 Community Boards have received no meaningful increase in their operating budgets. This persistent shortfall undermines our ability to recruit and retain qualified, nonpartisan public servants, invest in the technology that residents now expect in a post-pandemic world, and maintain open, accessible, and properly broadcast public meetings. Residents are increasingly turning to artificial intelligence for local government solutions and are frequently directed back to their Community Boards, demonstrating our unique value as the first line of government engagement; yet we continue to perform this work without the resources needed to keep pace.

Community Boards are rarely given credit for humbly resolving complicated cross-jurisdictional problems that cut across agency and City, State and Federal boundaries. And we often do this before the issues even make it onto any City Agency or Elected Officials' radars. Community Boards are also the first place for community opinion on local matters. Although our recommendations are sometimes unpopular with decision-makers, our charter-mandated independence is fundamental to honest, community-driven planning and oversight. I urge the Council to preserve that independence and to establish a stable and sustainable funding baseline for all Community Boards.

Now I would like to turn to the bills proposed today.

Intro 1065 would grant Borough Presidents authority to remove District Managers and impose terms. District Managers are nonpartisan, professional civil servants who serve at the pleasure of their boards. Manhattan Community Board 1, like many others, already follows publicly adopted bylaws that require annual performance reviews and provide clear procedures for discipline or removal when warranted. Politicising this process would erode institutional knowledge, diminish staff morale, and weaken the very accountability that the bill purports to strengthen. For these reasons, I respectfully oppose Intro 1065.

Intros 472, 1075, 1134, 1314, and 1318, as well as the data-collection provisions in Intro 1075, aim to enhance training and transparency. Their intent is laudable; however, implementation should leverage existing City infrastructure. The City's online training portal already serves hundreds of thousands of employees and could be extended to Community Board members and staff once access for non-government email addresses is enabled. Duplicative systems would be costly and inefficient.

Intros 1250 and 1315 would require boards to livestream meetings, distribute digital newsletters, and publish meeting materials online. CB 1 fully supports these transparency measures, yet they are unfunded mandates. Software licences, hardware and staff time carry real costs. We therefore reiterate our request for an operating budget adjustment before such requirements take effect.

Intro 1316 directs DCAS to assist boards in securing adequate office and meeting space. CB 1 benefits from sufficient space at 1 Centre Street, thanks to a long-standing partnership with DCAS and the Manhattan Borough President, but many boards are not so fortunate. Ensuring that every board can host meetings in its own building is essential to accessibility, staff efficiency, and public participation, and I support the bill on their behalf.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued support of New York City's Community Boards. I invite any member of the Committee to attend a CB 1 meeting at 1 Centre Street and to see first-hand the critical work our staff and volunteers perform every day.

Valerie De La Rosa, *Chair*
Eugene Yoo, *First Vice Chair*
Donna Raftery, *Second Vice Chair*



Antony Wong, *Treasurer*
Emma Smith, *Secretary*
Brian Pape, *Assistant Secretary*
Mark Diller, *District Manager*

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Hon. Erik Bottcher
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Hon. Mark Levine
Manhattan Borough President
1 Centre Street, 19th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Speaker Adams, Chair Restler, Council Members Marte, Rivera and Bottcher, and Borough President Levine:

At our May 22, 2025 Full Board meeting, Community Board 2/Manhattan adopted the following resolution:

Manhattan Community Board 2 Resolution Opposing Intro 1065 Regarding Terms of Employment for District Managers

WHEREAS, Int. No. 1065, introduced by Council Member Williams, seeks to amend the New York City Charter to establish fixed four-year terms for district managers of community boards, with provisions for reappointment and removal by the community board or borough president; and

WHEREAS, under current law, district managers serve at the pleasure of the community board, providing boards with essential flexibility and autonomy to respond to the needs of their districts without the limitations of term appointments; and

WHEREAS, the proposed legislation introduces ambiguity and potential conflict by giving borough presidents the power to remove district managers mid-term, which could undermine

the independence of community boards and politicize the role of district manager; and

WHEREAS, district managers play a vital administrative and leadership role that requires continuity, trust, and close alignment with the board they serve; and

WHEREAS, fixed terms could disrupt the effective functioning of community boards by introducing unnecessary instability, discouraging long-term planning, and undermining board-district manager relationships; and

WHEREAS, Manhattan Community Board 2 (CB2M) was not consulted in the development of this legislation and strongly believes that any proposed changes to the structure and governance of community boards should include meaningful input from boards themselves; and

WHEREAS, the legislation proposes a significant structural change without demonstrating a compelling need or offering sufficient justification based on performance, transparency, or community engagement concerns; and

WHEREAS, CB2M values the ability to recruit and retain highly capable district managers based on performance and board needs, rather than rigid timelines or politically influenced decision-making;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Manhattan Community Board 2 strongly opposes Int. No. 1065 as currently written; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that CB2M calls upon the New York City Council to reject this legislation and to instead engage in a thorough and collaborative process with community boards to address any concerns related to district manager oversight, accountability, and performance.

Passed, with 36 in favor, none opposed, 6 abstentions (J. Herrera, R. Kessler, P. McDaid, M. Perreira, B. Roessler, E. Siegel), and no recusals.

We respectfully request that the Council take action consistent with the position expressed above.

Respectfully submitted –



Valerie De La Rosa
Chair, Community Board 2/Manhattan

Copies: Hon. Dr. Nantasha Williams, NYC Council, 27th District
 Hon. Brian Kavanagh, NYS Senate, 27th District
 Hon. Brad Hoylman-Sigal, NYS Senate, 47th District
 Hon. Grace Lee, NYS Assembly, 65th District
 Hon. Deborah Glick, NYS Assembly, 66th District



CITY OF NEW YORK
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JESSICA CHAIT
Chair

JESSE R. BODINE
District Manager

Manhattan Community Board 4 and District Manager
Testimony
Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation
6/16/2025

Greeting Chair Restler, honorable Council Members, and especially legislative staff. Thank you for holding this hearing on the proposed legislation and on community board Oversight.

I am Jesse Bodine, District Manager for Manhattan Community Board 4. I have been the District Manager for 10 years. I am here today to provide testimony on behalf of MCB4 as well as myself in my professional capacity.

In regard to Intro 1065, requiring terms of employment for district managers, MCB4 opposes this proposed legislation. MCB4 believes codifying fixed terms for the District Manager position introduces an implication of political rotation, which runs counter to the very nature of roles built on institutional memory and deep expertise. In addition, Intro 1065 leads to the false impression that district managers cannot be removed until the end of a set term. This creates ambiguity as to our current understanding that district managers are at-will employees subject to ongoing evaluation based on performance and not arbitrary timelines.

Now, speaking solely as a District Manager,

I believe Intro 0472 - Requiring Borough Presidents Office to provide EEO training to all board members makes sense and creates a clear explanation as to who is responsible for training board members. This is especially timely since the Equal Employment Practices Commission now requires community boards to keep records that Chairs have completed EEO trainings.

I also believe that Intro 1316 - Establishing an office of community board support within the Department of Citywide Administrative Services has merit. Community boards have unique operational needs and having

someone who understands how community boards function and who could advocate for us, would be a step in the right direction.

However, Intro 1315 - Requiring community boards to email a monthly newsletter and videoconference their meetings and hearings is an overreach. After the Open Meeting Law was amended, community boards were instructed to draft and vote on their own hybrid and remote meeting policy. Unless a board's policy conflicts with the open meeting law, I would not support city legislation that circumvents a board freedom to run their board how they see best. In addition, without committing long-term funding this may not be a reality for some boards.

My last point is on an issue that is not addressed in this current package of proposed legislation. Local law requires city agencies to provide interpretation and/or translation services. Currently, it is left up to each community board to fund any language interpretation needed for their meetings. My suggestion, rather than request additional funds for all community boards I would suggest that the City Council direct OMB to approve funds on an ad hoc basis for language Interpretation similar to how ASL Interpretation is handled.



CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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JESSICA CHAIT
Chair

JESSE R. BODINE
District Manager

June 12, 2025

Hon. Lincoln Restler
Chair
City Council Committee on Governmental Operations,
State & Federal Legislation
250 Broadway, 1883
New York, NY 10007

Re: Int 1065 - By Council Member Williams - A Local Law to amend the New York city charter, in relation to the terms of employment for district managers.

Dear Chair Restler,

Manhattan Community Board 4 (MCB4) at its June 4, 2025 meeting voted, by a vote of 43 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstaining, and 1 Present Not Eligible to vote, its opposition to Int. No. 1065 Regarding Terms of Employment for District Managers.

Int. 1065 would impose fixed four-year terms on Community Board district managers, with provisions for reappointment and removal by the Community Board or Borough President.¹ This proposed legislation amends the current law, under which district managers serve Community Boards as standard at-will employees, without the limitations of term appointments.

District managers are not political appointees: they are experienced, nonpartisan civil servants with an intimate, working knowledge of their communities and City government. Codifying fixed terms for these positions introduces an implication of

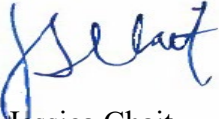
¹ In relevant part, the Int. 1065 adds the following language: “A district manager shall serve a term of four years, except that the first such term shall run from the effective date of the local law that added this sentence until December 31 of the fourth full calendar year thereafter. A community board may reappoint the same person as district manager for successive terms, and the community board or borough president with jurisdiction over a community district may remove that district’s district manager before the expiration of such term. A member of a community board shall be eligible for appointment to the position of district manager provided that such member does not participate in any manner in the selection of the district manager by the board and resigns as a member of any board prior to or upon assuming the duties of district manager”

political rotation, which runs counter to the very nature of roles built on institutional memory and deep expertise — not political cycles.

Furthermore, the language of Int. 1065 risks creating the false impression that district managers cannot be removed until the end of a set term, despite the bill's allowance for removal. This creates ambiguity as to our current understanding that district managers are at-will employees subject to ongoing evaluation based on performance and not arbitrary timelines.

Most troublingly, this bill comes at a time when civil servants across the country are under increasing attack and as the Federal Government attempts to undermine the foundations of effective and ethical governance. The integrity of our city's governance depends on maintaining a clear distinction between political appointments and the professional civil service. Let us not muddy the waters with this legislation.

Sincerely,



Jessica Chait

Chair

Manhattan Community Board 4

cc: Sitting Council Members of the Committee on Governmental Operations,
 Hon. Gale A. Brewer, City Council
 Hon. Erik Bottcher, City Council
 Hon. Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President
 Hon. Brad Hoylman-Sigal, State Senate
 Hon. Tony Simone, State Assembly

SANDY MCKEE
CHAIR

JOHN KELLER, FIRST VICE CHAIR
VACANT, SECOND VICE CHAIR



JESÚS PÉREZ
DISTRICT MANAGER

BEATRICE DISMAN, TREASURER
VACANT, ASST. TREASURER
JUSTIN GOLDBERG, SECRETARY
JERRY WEINSTEIN, ASST. SECRETARY

THE CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD SIX
211 EAST 43RD STREET, SUITE 1404
NEW YORK, NY 10017

Testimony to the New York City Council Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation at their Oversight Hearing on Community Board Resources and Support

Delivered at the City Hall Committee Room on June 16, 2025.

Good morning, Chair Restler and Members of the New York City Council Committee on Governmental Operations. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today.

My name is Jesús Pérez, and I am the District Manager of Manhattan Community Board Six (CB6). I'm here on behalf of Manhattan CB6 today to state our firm opposition to Int. 1065.

Int. 1065 would impose fixed four-year terms for district managers and give borough presidents new authority to remove district managers at any time, for any reason. That is not oversight—it's overreach. Overreach that threatens the independence and effectiveness of community boards across the city.

As I'm sure you know, the City Charter already provides that District Managers serve at the pleasure of their boards. So community boards don't need Int. 1065 to dismiss their District Manager. What community boards need is the autonomy to manage their staff based on merit, performance, and the needs of their districts—not artificial timelines or political interference, which Int. 1065 would invite.

What community boards need are increased operating budgets and appropriate office and meeting facilities, especially with the increased complexity and necessity of hybrid meetings.

What community boards need is a city government that invests in the professional development of their public servants, so those district managers who are performing well, can seek to serve their communities even better and those who may have room for improvement, have the support they need to reach the heights of your expectations. This is even more important in the context of impending term limits for community board members because the district manager represents essential institutional knowledge that cannot now be relied upon from the members alone.

There is no demonstrated need for Int. 1065. It is a solution in search of a problem. All it does is introduce instability and confusion, and risks politicizing the non-political role of District Manager.

Manhattan Community Board Six urges the Council to reject Int. 1065 outright and instead work in partnership with community boards to strengthen—not weaken—the systems that support good governance at the neighborhood level.

Thank you.

**Chinese-American Planning Council, Inc.
Testimony at the New York City Council Governmental Operations, State & Federal
Legislation Committee
Honorable Lincoln Restler, Chair
June 16th, 2025**

Thank you Chair Restler and members of the City Council for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Ashley Chen and I'm the Policy Analyst at the Chinese-American Planning Council (CPC). The mission CPC is to promote social and economic empowerment of Chinese American, immigrant, and low-income communities. CPC was founded in 1965 as a grassroots, community-based organization in response to the end of the Chinese Exclusion years and the passing of the Immigration Reform Act of 1965. Our services have expanded since our founding to include three key program areas: education, family support, and community and economic empowerment.

CPC is the largest Asian American social service organization in the U.S., providing vital resources to more than 80,000 people per year through more than 50 programs at over 30 sites across Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Queens. CPC employs over 700 staff whose comprehensive services are linguistically accessible, culturally sensitive, and highly effective in reaching low-income and immigrant individuals and families. With the firm belief that social service can incite social change, CPC strives to empower our constituents as agents of social justice, with the overarching goal of advancing and transforming communities.

As a member of CACF's [Invisible No More](#) campaign, which has pushed for data disaggregation in New York State for over a decade, CPC has seen firsthand how clear, disaggregated data on our diverse AAPI communities is necessary for the creation of strong and equitable public policy.

I am here today in support of Int. 1134, which would require agencies to explicitly collect and report data on at least the ten most populous groups within each broad race/ethnicity category. We hope that agencies will then implement this by having dropdowns and/or checkboxes on forms offering New Yorkers the opportunity to provide greater specificity and clarity about their ethnic identification.

The broad "Asian" category often masks significant disparities among diverse ethnic subgroups. For instance, socioeconomic outcomes can vary widely between East Asian, Southeast Asian, and South Asian communities in NYC. Disaggregated data would reveal these nuanced differences, allowing for more targeted and effective policy interventions.

Int. 1134 will be the nation's most inclusive data disaggregation bill by expanding and collecting data on:

- Minimum categories (broad groups like Asian, Black/African American, etc.)
 - Regional subgroups (geographic regions like East Asian, Caribbean, etc.)
 - Detailed subgroups (detailed identities like Japanese, Jamaican, etc.)
- Currently, New York City agencies only collect and disaggregate data for the top 30 most populous ancestry groups, and only seven agencies are required by law to do so. This limited approach means that many communities—those not included in the top 30—are left out of data collection efforts. As a result, their unique needs go unrecognized and

unaddressed by city agencies, rendering these communities effectively invisible in policy and resource decisions.

It is important for the City to pass this bill into law at the current moment, when the federal government has put our right to high-quality data on New Yorkers at risk by gutting funding for the Census Bureau, encouraging staff departures from the bureau, and aggressively undermining the reputation and credibility of ongoing and future census data collection efforts among the public. At a time when the new federal administration appears to be disinterested in if not wholly hostile toward the value of race/ethnicity data for efficient and effective policy making, the City must be an example for the rest of the country.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, aggregated data masked disparities in health outcomes among different ethnic groups within the Asian American population. Data from the NYC Department of Health revealed that the Asian American community faced higher rates of severe illness and barriers to healthcare access compared to the general population. By disaggregating this data, policymakers would have been able to identify specific needs within sub-groups, such as Mandarin-speaking elderly individuals, who faced unique challenges in accessing healthcare services and information. Disaggregated data would transform how our City offers vital resources and services to our marginalized communities.

Furthermore, this granular approach to data collection across NYC agencies would promote greater transparency and accountability in addressing the unique challenges faced by specific Asian ethnic groups, such as educational disparities, healthcare access issues, or economic inequalities. By mandating the collection and reporting of detailed ethnicity data, we would empower Asian communities to advocate for their distinct needs and monitor progress on issues affecting their specific populations.

We strongly urge the City Council to pass Intro. 1134, which would establish uniform standards for the collection and reporting of race and ethnicity data across all NYC agencies.

I want to thank Councilmember Shekar Krishnan for his advocacy and for championing this bill, and we ask the Committee on Government Operations, State & Federal Legislation to vote unanimously in favor of this bill without delay. Thank you for your time and consideration.

If there are any questions or concerns, feel free to reach out to Ashley Chen, Policy Analyst at achen9@cpc-nyc.org.



integration starts here 

Center for the Integration and Advancement of New Americans, Inc.

My name is Micah Dicker and I represent CIANA, the Center for the Integration and Advancement of New Americans, based in Astoria, Queens.

In recent years, the communities that CIANA serves- Middle Eastern, West Asian, and South Asian immigrants- have found a home in the greater Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) diaspora. Thanks to our partnership with CACF and our fellow member organizations, we do not have to advocate for representation and inclusion of our communities alone. We are proud to stand with them today in calling for the passage of Intro 1134.

Recognizing our city's unmatched diversity through accurate data collection is necessary for organizations like CIANA to provide culturally competent social services based on the needs of our community. When our city collects data based on imprecise, outdated categorizations of race and ethnicity, we risk mischaracterizing the very communities we are advocating for, and widening financial, educational, and health equity gaps that we aim to close.

Our Arab American neighbors know this well, having experienced discrimination for years. Inclusion under the AAPI umbrella has greatly amplified their voices, but it's not perfect. North Africans, for instance, compose a large portion of NYC's Arabic speakers, but are geographically not Asian. Some of them might identify less as Arab and more with their Amazigh (Berber) heritage. Under current practices, city data renders many such cultures essentially invisible, and even more marginalized than they already are.

Incomplete data also creates challenges for CBOs like CIANA to target our services towards certain underrepresented groups in certain neighborhoods. Not having detailed information- geographic, linguistic, financial, and otherwise- on our client populations prevents us from meeting their needs in a way that is efficient and culturally competent.

Under Intro 1134, all New Yorkers will be given more options to self-identify their race and ethnicity. "Middle Eastern/North African" will finally be considered its own category, with the option to specify individual nationality and heritage. City agencies will be required to categorize and track its increasingly diverse population, from the scores of ethnic groups across Asia, the hundreds in the Pacific Islands, and every other ethnic group that calls NYC home.

Data disaggregation is all about understanding the makeup and diversity of NYC's communities and their numbers, making their needs more visible to policy makers, and ensuring that they receive their fair share of the city's resources- health, educational, financial, and more.

Asian Americans are not a monolith, but nevertheless stand united in our joint fight for individual recognition. Thank you Council Member Shekar Krishnan for his advocacy and for championing this bill. We ask the Committee on Government Operations, State & Federal Legislation to vote unanimously in favor of this bill without delay.

Thank you for your time.

Testimony in Support of Int 1134 and Collecting More Comprehensive Data

June 19, 2025

To the Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation:

My name is Molly Senack, and I am testifying today on behalf of the Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York (CIDNY) as their Education and Employment Community Organizer. This testimony is supported by Sharon McLennon Wier, Ph.D., MSEd., CRC, LMHC, Executive Director of CIDNY.

Racial and ethnic identities tend to be treated as monolithic. On forms, applications, questionnaires- you are given the option to identify as a member of the Black community, or the Asian community, or the multi-racial community, etc. The options are limited, and ignore that distinct and diverse communities exist within these larger populations. The Council is currently considering **Int 1134**, a bill that would allow NYC agencies to collect more comprehensive demographic data by offering a broader selection of racial and ethnic subcategories on forms and documents that might align more closely with respondents' identities. This is a critical step in both identifying the distinct needs that specific communities might have, and in ensuring those needs are subsequently met.

This is also a critical step in understanding the intersectionality of the barriers many of these communities are facing: in pursuing education, in finding gainful employment, in obtaining housing, in seeking healthcare. For instance, understanding the intersectionality of disability and culture, especially when it comes to providing trauma-informed services, is integral to a trusting and effective relationship between clinician and patient. This is why Multicultural Disability Competence (MDC)- which considers the way various cultures respond to therapy (or other cultural practices), how that might impact the therapeutic process, and then makes those same considerations in relation to disability- is regarded as an invaluable component of providing effective therapy.

However, disability is also frequently treated as a monolithic term, even with the subcategories designated by the U.S. Census: hearing difficulty, vision difficulty, cognitive difficulty, ambulatory difficulty, self-care difficulty, and independent living difficulty. In recognizing that significant oversight can occur when distinct racial and ethnic communities are viewed through too wide a lens, the same is true when considering distinct disabilities. When a categorization regarding disability is too broad (such as when the U.S. Census groups Traumatic Brain Injuries, Bipolar Disorder, depression, Intellectual Disability, ADHD, and dyslexia all under "cognitive difficulties"), overlooking certain barriers the people with those disabilities face becomes inevitable, even by well-meaning agencies and institutions. When disability gets treated as a monolith, so does accessibility, and a critical factor in providing New Yorkers with disabilities

with the support and resources they need is recognizing that accessibility is not limited to a singular mode of accommodation (physical, technological, sensory, etc.).

Of the almost 986,000 New Yorkers who report having a disability using the current metrics (making that number, which amounts to about 11% of the population, most likely an undercount- the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that approximately 29% of the population has a disability), 69% are people of color. CIDNY strongly supports the passage **Int 1134**, which will provide a more comprehensive view of the diversity of this population, and urges the City Council to follow this legislation with a similar data collection overhaul when it comes to disability. Doing so will give a more complete picture of the distinct intersectional barriers New Yorker face in the city, and will help ensure those barriers are addressed as effectively and impactfully as possible.

Sincerely,

Molly Senack (She/Her)
Education and Employment Community Organizer
Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York
Email: msenack@cidny.org Phone: (917)-415-3154

WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF SAMANTHA SANCHEZ, PROGRAM MANAGER, COMMON CAUSE NEW YORK

**Submitted to the New York City Council Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal
Legislation Hearing on Oversight and Community Board Reform Legislation
June 12, 2025**

Good morning, Chair and members of the Committee. My name is Samantha Sanchez, and I serve as the Program Manager at Common Cause New York, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization committed to strengthening open, accountable, and participatory government. Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on the set of bills focused on reforming and supporting New York City's community boards.

Community boards are the closest form of government to New Yorkers. They play a critical role in shaping land use, evaluating city services, and elevating community priorities- yet they are often under-resourced, under-supported, and structurally inconsistent across districts. We welcome this legislative package as a meaningful step toward addressing that reality. This package of legislation appears to directly respond to *The Future of New York City's Community Boards*, a 2021 report that outlined five urgent areas for reform: (1) Budgets and operations, (2) Member selection and training, (3) Budget consultation processes, (4) Communications and outreach, and (5) Land use and zoning.

Legislation Support

Common Cause New York supports the following bills and areas of improvement:

- Operational Infrastructure & Central Support: We strongly support the creation of an Office of Community Board Support within both DCAS and the Borough Presidents' offices (Preconsidered Intros by Council Member Restler). These bills would institutionalize core functions like legal, HR, IT, and office assistance, allowing boards to operate more professionally and equitably across the city.
- Board Member Training & Appointment Standards: We also support proposals to provide standardized training, clarify term start dates, and limit reappointments after four consecutive terms (Preconsidered Intro by Restler; Int. 472 by Council Member Williams). These measures align with recommendations from the 2021 report calling for more robust onboarding, experience-based eligibility, and tools for successful participation.
- Digital Engagement and Public Access: The requirement that community boards videoconference meetings and send monthly email newsletters (Preconsidered Intro by Restler) is a practical and overdue reform to improve accessibility for residents with mobility limitations, work obligations, or caregiving responsibilities.
- Disaggregated Race & Ethnicity Data: We also support Int. 1134 (Council Member Krishnan), which would enhance the City's demographic data collection standards using disaggregated and voluntary data based on U.S. Census Bureau guidelines. This is a key step toward racial equity in city services and policymaking.

Areas of Support

While we are encouraged by these proposals, critical elements from the 2021 report remain unaddressed:

- Dedicated Urban Planners: The report recommends that each board be provided with a staff line and funding for a professionally trained planner to support its land use responsibilities. None of the bills in this package establishes or funds such positions. Without them, boards are left to interpret complex zoning issues without sufficient technical support.
- Budget Consultation Reform: The report also calls for one-on-one agency consultations and meaningful responses to board budget requests, which are not included in this legislative package. This remains a gap in fulfilling community boards' Charter-mandated role in the City's budgeting process.

Common Cause New York's Broader Position

Common Cause New York supports this legislative package and urges its passage. But we also believe the Council must go further. Empowering community boards to uphold their Charter mandates requires structural investment, not just procedural reform. We recommend that the Council pursue future legislation to:

- Fund dedicated planning staff for each board
- Restore and enhance agency engagement in the budget process
- Ensure technology access, language support, and physical space upgrades are equitably distributed across all districts.

Conclusion

This is a pivotal opportunity to modernize our community boards and strengthen neighborhood democracy. The reforms before you today are necessary, but they are not sufficient. We urge the Council to pass these bills and commit to a second phase of reform to ensure community boards are fully empowered. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I welcome any questions.

Sources



New York City Council. *The Future of New York City's Community Boards*. New York, NY: New York City Council, December 2021. <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/communityboards/downloads/FINAL-Future-of-CBs-Report.pdf>.

New York City Council. *Int. No. 1134: A Local Law to amend the New York City charter, in relation to race and ethnicity data collected by agencies*. Introduced by Council Member Krishnan, 2025.

New York City Council. *Int. No. 472: A Local Law in relation to requiring borough presidents to provide equal employment opportunity trainings to community board members*. Introduced by Council Member Williams, 2025.

New York City Council. *Preconsidered Int. (Restler): A Local Law to establish an Office of Community Board Support within the Department of Citywide Administrative Services*. 2025.

New York City Council. *Preconsidered Int. (Restler): A Local Law to require borough presidents to establish and maintain an office to assist community boards by providing legal, IT, community planning, and HR support*. 2025.

New York City Council. *Preconsidered Int. (Restler): A Local Law in relation to community board member training, appointment dates, and qualifications*. 2025.

New York City Council. *Preconsidered Int. (Restler): A Local Law to require community boards to email monthly newsletters and videoconference their meetings and hearings*. 2025.





Garden of Hope

紐約勵馨

P.O. BOX 520048, Flushing, NY 11352 TEL: 718-321-8862 WWW.GOHNY.ORG

Testimony for Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

Organization Name: Garden of Hope

EIN Number: 200177587

My name is Szuchi Amy Tai, and I am Co-Deputy Director at Garden of Hope, a social service nonprofit organization that has served the AAPI community in New York City for over 20 years. Due to our cultural and language accessibility, we have been able to reach and support thousands of survivors of human trafficking, domestic violence, and sexual assault, particularly within the Chinese community.

Thank you very much to Chair Lincoln Restler and the Committee on Government Operations for holding this hearing and providing the opportunity to testify in support of Int. 1134.

I want to express my organization's strong support for Intro. 1134—a transformative piece of legislation that will significantly expand how New York City agencies collect and disaggregate race and ethnicity data from New Yorkers accessing city services.

Currently, many AAPI communities are rendered invisible in city data due to broad racial categorizations that obscure the unique needs and challenges faced by specific ethnic subgroups. This bill will not only ensure the true visibility of all New Yorkers in the data but also recognize that no community is a monolith.

Int. 1134 would require agencies to explicitly collect and report data on at least the ten most populous groups within each broad race/ethnicity category. We hope agencies will implement this by including dropdowns and/or checkboxes on forms that offer New Yorkers the opportunity to provide greater specificity and clarity about their ethnic identification.

The Chinese community we serve faces barriers that are often masked by broad “Asian” categorizations—such as limited English proficiency and culturally specific experiences of gender-based violence. Int. 1134 will help uncover these hidden needs by requiring more detailed data collection, allowing city agencies to develop targeted policies and allocate resources more equitably to truly support our community.

I want to thank Councilmember Shekar Krishnan for his advocacy and for championing this bill, and we ask the Committee on Government Operations, State & Federal Legislation to vote unanimously in favor of this bill without delay. Thank you for your time.



Int. 1134 Public Hearing June 16, 2025

Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

Good afternoon, my name is Natsuko Okazaki and I am the Director at Japanese American Social Services, Inc. The mission of JASSI is to improve the quality of life for people living in the New York metropolitan area by providing quality social services at the local community level. Since its inception in 1981, JASSI has provided services to people who face problems resulting from language barriers, cultural differences, and/or differences in the service systems. JASSI provides these services to people free of charge regardless of age, income, gender, race, ethnicity, or immigration status. Thank you very much to Chair Lincoln Restler and the Committee on Government Operations for holding this hearing and providing the opportunity to testify in support of Int. 1134.

As a proud coalition member of the Invisible No More campaign, led by the Coalition for Asian American Children and Families (CACF), we have been advocating for 15 years to ensure that New York City and State governments collect accurate, disaggregated data and information about our diverse New York City communities. I am here today to express my organization's strong support for Intro. 1134 – a transformative piece of legislation that will significantly expand how New York City agencies collect and disaggregate race and ethnicity data from New Yorkers accessing city services.

Suggested language: Japanese

This bill will not only ensure the true visibility of all New Yorkers in the data, but it will also recognize that no community is a monolith. By capturing the rich diversity within and across communities, this legislation affirms the unique identities and experiences that make up our city's population.

The Japanese American population is not growing as rapidly as other Asian groups in New York. As a result, they often have less political clout and visibility in AAPI advocacy spaces, which tend to be dominated by larger or more recently mobilized communities. Furthermore, Japanese Americans have one of the oldest age profiles among Asian American groups. Many are widowed, living alone, or linguistically isolated. This leads to different community needs, particularly around elder care, language-accessible services, and health infrastructure than younger, rapidly growing populations like other groups.

Int. 1134 will be the nation's most inclusive data disaggregation bill by expanding and collecting data on:

- Minimum categories (broad groups like Asian, Black/African American, etc.)
- Regional subgroups (geographic regions like East Asian, Caribbean, etc.)
- Detailed subgroups (detailed identities like Japanese, Jamaican, etc.)

Board President: Ryoko Mochizuki, CBP, CCP, CPA, MBA, JD, Esq., *President of Law Office of Ryoko Mochizuki & Associates LLC (LORMA)*; **Board Treasurer:** Sayaka Araki, CPA, *Interim co-Director CEO/CFO at The Newark Museum of Art*; **Board Secretary:** Mayumi Iijima, Esq., *Law Offices of Mayumi Iijima, P.C.*; **Board of Directors:** Koichi Aiba, *Flutist*; Takashi Amano, *Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work, Rutgers University, Newark*; Hiroko Hatanaka, *Former V.P. of IW Group*; Monica Jensen, *Executive Assistant, Brookfield Asset Management*; Yoshio Kano, *Executive Secretary of Japanese Medical Society of America, Inc.*; Sayaka Takeda, *Nomura Research Institute America*; **Honorary Board Member:** Tazuko Shibusawa, Ph.D., LCSW, *Executive Officer, Shibusawa Eiichi Memorial Foundation*; **Advisory Board:** Hideo Dan, *Attorney at Law*; Richard Hara, Ph.D., *Lecturer of Columbia University School of Social Work*; Yoko Naka, MSW; Kanako Okuda, DSW, MSW, LCSW, *Assistant Dean of Practicum Education & Clinical Associate Professor, Boston University School of Social Work*; Kozo Osaki, CPA; Tazuko Shibusawa, Ph.D., LCSW, *Executive Officer, Shibusawa Eiichi Memorial Foundation*; **Staff:** Natsuko Okazaki, MSW, CAC, *Director*; Tomoko Hirano, MS, *Office Manager*; Mizue Katayama, MA, *Senior Program Manager*; Ayumi Kikawa Cimino, BA, CHN, *Case Manager*; Mizuho Kitagawa, BA, *Senior Manager of Administration/Case Assistant*; Rika Kobashi-Barnes, MA, CHN, *Case Worker/Health Navigator*; Yuri Nonoyama, *Administrative Assistant/Program Coordinator*; Emiko Tsuchiya, BA, *Case Worker/Program Coordinator*; Haruko Yoshida Audia, BA, CHN, *Case Worker/Health Navigator*; Yoko Yoshida, MA, CHN, *Senior Health Navigator/Case Worker*



Currently, New York City agencies only collect and disaggregate data for the top 30 most populous ancestry groups, and only seven agencies are required by law to do so. This limited approach means that many communities—those not included in the top 30—are left out of data collection efforts. As a result, their unique needs go unrecognized and unaddressed by city agencies, rendering these communities effectively invisible in policy and resource decisions. Int. 1134 would require agencies to explicitly collect and report data on at least the ten most populous groups within each broad race/ethnicity category. We hope that agencies will then implement this by having dropdowns and/or checkboxes on forms offering New Yorkers the opportunity to provide greater specificity and clarity about their ethnic identification.

Most notably, Int. 1134 goes beyond traditional data collection norms and will collect data on transnational communities (like Indo-Caribbeans) that span across multiple racial, ethnic, or regional categories. This ensures that communities with complex, intersecting identities are also accurately represented in the data, rather than being forced into overly simplistic or inaccurate classifications.

Int. 1134 will also incentivize city agencies to evaluate their services based on the collected data.

The Japanese community in NYC is smaller and more dispersed compared to other Asian populations. Without disaggregated data, they are statistically invisible and funding and outreach initiatives may never reach them. The city agencies may falsely assume that they don't need certain support. Disaggregated data helps highlight the unique challenges and needs of Japanese Americans, who may differ significantly from other AAPI groups in terms of health, income, education, language access, and aging population trends.

I want to thank Councilmember Shekar Krishnan for his advocacy and for championing this bill, and we ask the Committee on Government Operations, State & Federal Legislation to vote unanimously in favor of this bill without delay.

Thank you for your time.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Natsuko Okazaki", written in a cursive style.

Natsuko Okazaki
Director

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212-442-1541 ext. 1
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Testimony for the New York City Council Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

June 16, 2025

Testimony of Myoungmi Kim, President and CEO Korean Community Services of Metropolitan New York, Inc. (KCS)

Thank you, Council Members, for allowing me to testify today. My name is Myoungmi Kim, and I serve as President and CEO of KCS – Korean Community Services of Metropolitan New York, Inc. For over 50 years, our organization has provided critical services to immigrant and minority communities across New York City, in the areas of Aging, Education, Immigration, Workforce Development, Public Health, and Mental Health. I am here today to express KCS’ strong support for Int. 1134, also known as the Data Disaggregation Bill. Current demographic data systems group a wide range of ethnicities and cultures under broad categories such as “Asian.” This generalization conceals the unique challenges and disparities faced by distinct communities within New York City’s Asian population, including but not limited to Korean, Chinese, and Filipino communities. In particular, the specific needs of low-income, older immigrants, and individuals facing language barriers are often overlooked in policies related to healthcare, housing, education, and mental health. Disaggregated data is not just about numbers—it is about visibility, equity, and survival. It ensures that resources and policies are informed by the realities our communities live every day. This bill will allow us to better understand whom we are serving and what they truly need. KCS urges the City Council to pass this legislation to help make New York City a more inclusive, data-informed, and equitable city for all. Your support will be critical to promoting healthier lives for NYC’s underrepresented, vulnerable community members.

Thank you.

Myoungmi Kim

President & CEO

Korean Community Services of Metropolitan New York, Inc.

(ADULT DAYCARE
EDUCATION | HR
IMMIGRATION &
LEGAL SERVICES |
PUBLIC HEALTH AND
RESEARCH CENTER |
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Int. 1134 Public Hearing

June 18, 2025

Good afternoon, my name is Hamida Chumpa and I am the Data and Research Manager at Laal NYC. Laal NYC is a nonprofit organization located in the Bronx, New York City that aims to provide resources Bengali women need to live healthy, engaged, and joyful lives. Thank you very much to Chair Lincoln Restler and the Committee on Government Operations for holding this hearing and providing the opportunity to testify in support of Int. 1134.

As a proud member of the Invisible No More campaign, led by CACF, Laal strongly supports Intro. 1134—a vital step toward ensuring city agencies better reflect the racial and ethnic identities of all New Yorkers.

At Laal, we have seen firsthand how the lack of data disaggregation obscures the challenges faced by Bangladeshi women in the Bronx. While the Bangladeshi population is among the fastest-growing immigrant groups in NYC, our community is often lumped into broad categories like "Asian" or "South Asian," erasing critical distinctions in language access, health outcomes, and socioeconomic barriers. When we looked for data to support asthma prevention, maternal health interventions, or economic development programs, we found that our community was statistically invisible. Bengali women in our programs often express confusion when filling out city forms that offer no clear options for identifying themselves. This invisibility leads to under-resourcing, underrepresentation, and continued inequities. At Laal, we often have to conduct our own assessments because existing citywide data fails to reflect the specific realities and needs of our community.

In our reproductive and maternal health work at Laal, we've witnessed how the lack of disaggregated data directly harms our community. For example, there is no clear data on how often language barriers during labor and delivery prevent women from understanding medical decisions being made about their bodies. Many Bengali-speaking women give birth in hospitals without any language support or culturally competent care, leading to fear, trauma, and poor health outcomes. Without ethnic subgroup data, it's hard to tell how many Bangladeshi families are unable to navigate Medicaid coverage for doulas, midwifery, or reproductive services. Since our community is grouped into broad categories like "Asian" or "Other," their needs are overlooked in city planning and funding. Intro. 1134 is essential to making these invisible challenges visible—and ensuring that reproductive justice and maternal health services are equitable and truly inclusive.

Int. 1134 will be the nation's most inclusive data disaggregation bill by expanding and collecting data on:

- Minimum categories (broad groups like Asian, Black/African American, etc.)
- Regional subgroups (geographic regions like East Asian, Caribbean, etc.)
- Detailed subgroups (detailed identities like Japanese, Jamaican, etc.)

This level of detail is not bureaucratic – it is essential. Disaggregated data can show, for example, the disproportionate prevalence of chronic diseases like diabetes and asthma in Bangladeshi communities due to factors like poor housing conditions or food insecurity, and help city agencies tailor services accordingly. Without this data, we are designing policy blindfolded.

For our community—and for so many others across the five boroughs—data equity is not abstract. It is about being seen, being counted, and ultimately, being served.

I want to thank Councilmember Shekar Krishnan for his advocacy and for championing this bill, and we ask the Committee on Government Operations, State & Federal Legislation to vote unanimously in favor of this bill without delay.

Thank you for your time.

Best,

Hamida Chumpa

Data and Research Manager

Laal NYC

Testimony in Support of Int. 1134

Submitted by: Husein Yatabarry, Executive Director

Muslim Community Network

To the NYC Council Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation

Hearing Date: Monday, June 16, 2024

Chairperson and members of the Committee,

My name is Husein Yatabarry, and I serve as the Executive Director of the Muslim Community Network (MCN). Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of **Intro 1134**, which would amend the New York City Charter to require agencies to use standardized and expanded race and ethnicity categories when collecting demographic data.

MCN works with diverse Muslim New Yorkers, many of whom identify with ethnic backgrounds that are currently not reflected in agency data. From Indo-Caribbean and West African communities to Bangladeshi and Arab New Yorkers, the erasure caused by overly broad racial categories like “Asian” or “Black” prevents policymakers, funders, and service providers from fully understanding and responding to our communities' needs.

Intro 1134 would ensure that data reflects the full diversity of our city by requiring agencies to offer more specific ethnic and regional options on forms and publish this data annually. This is more than a data reform—it's an equity reform. It would allow communities that have long been invisible in data to finally be seen, and in doing so, be better served.

Disaggregated data will help community organizations like MCN target programming, make stronger cases for funding, and ensure that our outreach is culturally responsive and effective. It will also help government agencies deliver more precise services and evaluate the true impact of their programs across subpopulations.

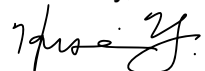
We also appreciate that this bill ensures that all data collection will be voluntary, privacy-protected, and will not affect eligibility for services. These provisions are essential to maintaining trust in government, especially for immigrant and Muslim communities that have experienced heightened surveillance and discrimination.

For too long, the lack of disaggregated data has allowed inequities in health, education, and safety to go unaddressed. **Intro 1134** is a necessary and timely step toward making New York City's government more inclusive, more transparent, and more accountable.

MCN urges the City Council to pass this bill and invest in an infrastructure that sees all New Yorkers—and serves them accordingly.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Husein Yatabarry

Executive Director

Muslim Community Network

husein@mcnny.org





DONOVAN RICHARDS
President

CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE
PRESIDENT OF THE BOROUGH OF QUEENS
120-55 QUEENS BOULEVARD
KEW GARDENS, NEW YORK 11424

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**WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF
ALLAN SWISHER
OFFICE OF THE QUEENS BOROUGH PRESIDENT**

**NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS,
STATE & FEDERAL LEGISLATION**

June 16, 2025

Thank you, Chair Restler and members of the committee, for the opportunity to speak on the important issue of adequately supporting our community boards.

My name is Allan Swisher, and I serve as general counsel and senior policy advisor for Queens Borough President Donovan Richards Jr. I help oversee our office's relationship with community boards in our borough. Borough President Richards has signed on to the joint testimony from borough presidents submitted to the committee, but I wanted to share just a few additional points on this topic.

I will start by emphasizing that each community board is its own city agency and independent from the borough president's office. Each community board has its own agency head—the chairperson, who is selected by the board's own members, not the borough president. They have their own budgets. They hire and supervise their own staff. They establish their own bylaws. They run their own meetings. And, most importantly, they reach their own independent recommendations on matters affecting their communities.

My office relies on that honest, independent input, even if the Borough President doesn't always end up concurring with it. I worry that assigning responsibility to the borough presidents to create and control a new, unfunded community board support office may threaten that independence. The interests of a community board and the interests of a borough president's office often diverge, and a borough-president-run office that provides legal and community planning advice has the potential to dampen community boards' independence and could raise conflicts of interest between the two.

My other concern is that some of these bills in their current form could give mayoral agencies further license to ignore their existing responsibilities to support community boards as city agencies. One illustrative example: my office's EEO officer has approached DCAS multiple times over several years asking for their assistance in providing their EEO trainings to all Queens community board members. Each time, DCAS has argued that they cannot do it due to "technical limitations" because community board members are not city employees, although DCAS eventually agreed at our insistence to provide training just to the chairs, and I understand that they already provide these trainings to non-employees serving on other boards and commissions. I have numerous examples of community boards struggling to get routine support from other agencies, perhaps due to the misapprehension that community boards are

under the borough presidents' control. My belief is that the best way to ensure that community board members receive the training and support contemplated in these bills—a goal we all share—is to make explicit that relevant agencies have a responsibility to assist.

We look forward to further engaging with you on this topic, because Borough President Richards agrees that community board members and staff need additional support and training, particularly as term limits begin to go into effect in 2027. To that end, the Borough President has already taken numerous actions within his power, including (1) appointing unprecedentedly-diverse classes of new appointees; (2) instituting trainings in consultation with DCP, BSA, COIB, and others at a mandatory orientation for new appointees; (3) establishing a code of conduct for members to help ensure that community boards are open and respectful spaces, and (4) helping boards update their bylaws to prepare new leaders and promote transparency.

Thank you for your time, and I am happy to answer any questions.



South Asian Youth Action

Int. 1134 Public Hearing

June 16, 2025

**Testimony from Sonia B. Sisodia, Executive Director, South Asian Youth Action (SAYA)
to the NYC City Council Committee on Governmental Operations, State & Federal Legislation**

Over the past 30 years, SAYA has provided beneficial youth development programming to underserved, immigrant New York City youth, currently serving over 4,000 students each year. Through our intentionally designed offerings, we help them develop social and emotional learning (SEL) skills; prepare for high school, college, and careers; cultivate confidence and leadership abilities; and build community and connection with their diverse peers.

SAYA is a proud member of the Invisible No More campaign, led by the Coalition for Asian American Children and Families (CACF). In this role, we have been advocating to ensure that New York City and State governments collect accurate, disaggregated data and information about our diverse New York City communities for the past 15 years. SAYA supports Intro. 1134—a transformative piece of legislation that will significantly expand how New York City agencies collect and disaggregate race and ethnicity data from New Yorkers who access city services.

Too often, when government agencies collect data, Asian Americans and Native Hawaiian Pacific Islanders are grouped together under a single label. Indo-Caribbean individuals often do not see themselves reflected at all in the options provided, leaving them invisible and undercounted in data. This practice of limiting options individuals can select about their identity, aggregating data ignores the unique and specific needs and challenges faced by each of the many ethnic groups that fall within these larger categories.

With the South Asian and Indo-Caribbean communities, there are significant differences in life experiences, income, and need for services. When we only look at the larger racial categories currently used, we miss the fact that certain groups face distinct barriers, from accessing social services to navigating the school system. These are barriers that SAYA sees firsthand every day through the experiences of our youth participants and their families.

This bill will ensure the true visibility of more New Yorkers in the data—leading to a more strategic allocation of City and nonprofit resources. By capturing the rich diversity within and across communities, this legislation affirms the unique identities and experiences that make up our City's population.

For over a decade, a number of SAYA's programs have been funded by contracts with City agencies, including the New York City Public Schools and the Department of Youth and Community Development. A lack of detailed data on the youth within each of our schools hinders us from making data-driven decisions on where SAYA's resources may be most needed and beneficial.

Int. 1134 will be the nation's most inclusive data disaggregation bill by expanding and collecting data on broad, regional, and detailed groups and subgroups—securing a more accurate picture of New York City's population. This bill would require City agencies to explicitly collect and report data on at least the 10 most populous groups within each broad race/ethnicity category. Most notably, Int. 1134 goes beyond traditional data collection norms and will collect data on transnational communities (like Indo-Caribbeans) that span across multiple racial, ethnic, or regional categories. This ensures that communities with complex, intersecting identities are also accurately represented in the data, rather than being forced into overly simplistic or inaccurate classifications.

New York City needs to prioritize collecting and analyzing high-quality population data on New Yorkers, especially as it becomes more diverse and populous than ever before. Disaggregated data would allow policymakers, businesses, and advocates to develop more effective solutions. By ensuring that City agencies collect and report data by ethnicity and language spoken, we can also ensure that more South Asian and Indo-Caribbean individuals, as well as others who are very often overlooked, access and receive the resources and services they need.

We thank Chair Lincoln Restler and the Committee on Government Operations for holding a hearing about Int. 1134. We also want to thank Councilmember Shekar Krishnan for his advocacy and for championing this bill. SAYA respectfully asks the Committee on Government Operations, State & Federal Legislation to vote unanimously in favor of this bill without delay.



**The Samaritans of New York, Inc. (Suicide Prevention Center)
Testimony of Fiodhna O’Grady, Director of Government Relations.
To the Committee on Government Operations, State & Federal Legislation.
Monday, June 16, 2025**

Good morning Chair of the Committee on Government Operations, State & Federal Legislation Lincoln Restler. My name is Fiodhna O’Grady, and I serve as the Director of Government Relations at **Samaritans of New York, Inc.** —the city’s only community-based organization solely devoted to suicide prevention, one of 400 Samaritans centers in 40 countries, and the US representative of the Samaritans’ centers in the US on the National Council for Suicide Prevention <https://www.thencsp.org/>

We are requesting to engage as you see fit with Chair Restler and the Committee Staff to discuss how the Council and New York State can respond to recent federal developments that jeopardize critical suicide prevention infrastructure. We have contacted our local Council Member Carlina Rivera and Assemblyman Harvey Epstein in these endeavors. Our focus is on legislative and departmental solutions that protect essential data systems, maintain equitable access to crisis services, and preserve supports for high-risk identity groups, including LGBTQ+ youth and Veterans.

We have already engaged with **Cristy Dwyer** (Senior Legislative Policy Analyst) and **Sara Sucher** (Legislative Counsel) and are coordinating with **Council Member Linda Lee**, Chair of the Committee on Mental Health, Disabilities, and Addiction, and have cc’d **Council Member Rita Joseph**, Chair of the Education Committee, for broader alignment.

Our Executive Director Casey Starr is a member of the **National Council for Suicide Prevention (NCSP)**, representing all U.S. Samaritans centers on policy issues at the national and local levels. Our coalition is closely tracking the impacts of these federal changes and is urging proactive state and municipal action. We believe New York can and should lead in protecting and strengthening suicide prevention efforts at this critical time. Key areas for discussion include:

1. Data Ownership and Protection

Although the CDC may host national suicide-related datasets, who owns the data collected in New York City and State? This question is critical. If local agencies do not have formal ownership or guaranteed access, decades of essential public health data could be lost—or become inaccessible—due to shifting federal policies. We urge New York City and State to clarify and assert their authority over suicide surveillance data.

Recent changes at the federal level—including the dismantling of the CDC’s Injury Prevention Center—have placed national suicide data infrastructure in jeopardy. In parallel, the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBS) <https://www.cdc.gov/yrbs/data/index.html> is being revised and may soon omit questions tied to sexual orientation, gender identity, and other social determinants of health—limiting its ability to guide equity-informed prevention.

We are seeking your support to:

- **Ensure that NYC DOHMH and NYS OMH have and preserve all historical suicide-related datasets previously managed at the federal level.**
- **Codify standards for continued, identity-inclusive data collection at the city and state level—including race, gender, disability, housing status, and Veteran status.**
- **Explore whether a New York-specific version of YRBS and other collection tools should be implemented if federal tools are weakened or no longer meet public health needs.**

The simultaneous rollback of surveillance and services—including reductions in Medicaid access and targeted crisis supports—is especially concerning because these cuts are happening without systems in place to measure their impact. This is not just a technical gap; it's a policy blind spot. Without accurate, local data, New York cannot track emerging needs, monitor disparities, or allocate resources effectively. Data must drive prevention strategies, policy decisions, and resource investments.

2. 988 Access, Equity, and Oversight

On June 17th, The federal government announced HHS's discontinuation of the "Press 3" option on 988, starting on July 17, 2025. This formally ends its contract with The Trevor Project and eliminates the only dedicated national crisis line for LGBTQ+ youth. Cuts earlier this year to Veteran-specific services further compound the issue.

LGBTQ+ youth are more than four times as likely to attempt suicide as their straight peers. One LGBTQ+ young person attempts suicide every 45 seconds.

Veterans die by suicide at rates 60% higher than their non-veteran peers. Over 60,000 Veterans have died by suicide in the last two decades.

We need clarity on:

- **How federal guidance will shape 988 operations in New York City and State**
- **What restrictions or service changes may apply to callers based on identity**
- **What safeguards can be implemented to ensure no one is turned away or underserved because of who they are**

We respectfully propose that the City Council explore a non-binding resolution calling on New York State to affirm non-discrimination protections for 988 users and safeguard access to crisis services regardless of identity.

3. Legislative Opportunities

We would like to discuss whether these issues can be addressed by amending existing city or state legislation, or if new legislation is needed. Specific legislative priorities include:

- **Protection and codification of identity-based crisis services**
- **Data continuity and ownership at the state and local level**
- **Oversight and accountability in 988 operations**

4. Immediate Coordination

Who will or could conduct the YRBS survey that the CDC may no longer administer comprehensively? Could NYC DOHMH, NYS OMH, or another entity assume responsibility for preserving its full scope?

- **What are the current and future guidelines around 988's interaction with callers, and what transparency can be provided to the public?**
- **Can the Council urge the State to take legislative action now, through a non-binding resolution, incorporation into existing bills, or introduction of new legislation?**

Our goal, and that of the National Council for Suicide Prevention, is to codify protections into law, focus on what can be done at the local level, and anticipate downstream consequences for suicide prevention and mental health systems.

We would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you at your earliest convenience to discuss next steps.

Thank you for your time and commitment to building a safer, more supportive New York City.

Fíodhna O'Grady, Director, Government Relations, The Samaritans of New York, Inc.
fogrady@samaritansnyc.org , (917) 536-3849, (212) 677-3009 samaritansnyc.org

Cc: Casey Starr, Executive Director, The Samaritans of New York, Inc.

From: [Betty Arce](#)
To: [Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] New York City Council Committee on Governmental Operations, State and Federal Legislation
Date: Friday, June 20, 2025 12:54:53 AM
Attachments: [CB 7 testimony 6.20.25](#)

[REDACTED]

Dear Committee Chair Restler and Committee Members

Attached please find my testimony regarding this committee's Oversight: Community Boards Resources and Support.

Thank you.

--

Betty-Diana Arce Falcon

[REDACTED]

**TESTIMONY OF BETTY ARCE, BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 7 MEMBER
JUNE 20,2025**

**TO THE
NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS,
STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATION
Oversight: Community Boards Resources and Support.**

I have been a member of Bronx Community Board 7 for 10 years and it has been an honor and privilege to serve in this capacity with the express goal of improving the quality of life for the residents of Bronx CB 7. Serving on the board has been the culmination of more than 50 years of community and public service and I have thoroughly enjoyed working with my colleagues and the various city agencies and elected officials to bring about lasting positive changes to our neighborhoods.

I am pleased that the city council and this committee is reviewing the role of borough boards, community boards and advisory bodies and the support and assistance they receive or the lack thereof. I hope that the intent of these bills is to both enhance the work of these bodies as well as provide substantial funding to execute the terms therein.

My testimony corresponds to a few bills before the committee regarding support and resources to community boards.

[Int. 0472 \(Williams\)](#) - in relation to requiring the borough presidents to provide equal employment opportunity trainings to community board members.

The Bronx Borough President provides EEO Trainings for board members; Board Members need to be reminded of their obligation and responsibility to access mandated trainings.

[Int. 1065 \(Williams\)](#) – in relation to the terms of employment for district managers

I oppose any term limits regarding the employment of district managers. I strongly oppose the involvement of the borough president to remove a district manager at will. Community boards should continue to be the entity that hires and evaluates a District Manager's job performance. It is one of our most important functions and should not be abridged in any way.

District Managers are non-partisan city employees, and the backbone of the community board office. The relationship between district manager and community board is critical to operating a cohesive and responsive community board office. Limiting a district manager's term to 4 years would be problematic and is not in the best interest of a community board. The work of the district manager is arduous and finding qualified individuals willing to take on the responsibility of the position can be difficult. A board does not want to

spend its time looking for a new district manager but rather retaining a good district manager and administrator.

Preconsidered Int. (Restler) – in relation to requiring community boards to email a monthly newsletter and videoconference their meetings and hearings

Bronx Community Board 7 currently distributes a weekly newsletter via email to all board members and to community residents who sign up to receive CB7 information. In addition, the community board maintains social media pages with relevant information, including calendar of meetings, notification of committee and board meetings, and relevant information and resources.

To the point about videoconferencing meetings, it would cost Bronx Community Board 7 approximately \$35,000 per year to videoconference 10 monthly meetings per year. The cost of each videoconference and broadcast of a meeting is \$3,500 per meeting as relayed by BronxNet Leadership. Unless the budget of the community board is increased commensurate with such a requirement, this would impose a financial hardship on Bronx Community Board 7.

Preconsidered Int. (Restler) – in relation to requiring borough presidents to establish and maintain an office to assist community boards by providing legal, information technology, community planning, and human resources support.

I know that Bronx Community Board 7 and other community boards would welcome additional resources such as legal, information technology, community planning and human resources support. However, the Bronx BP can better respond as to their capacity to provide this assistance as this would most likely require more staff.

Preconsidered Int. (Restler) – in relation to establishing an office of community board support within the department of citywide administrative services

I wholeheartedly support the establishment of an office that would support the physical needs of community board offices, especially in finding accessible public meeting spaces and permanent office spaces; and that would work with community boards to conduct regular assessments regarding the physical needs of community board offices and help with any needed repairs or upgrades to the offices.

In closing, Community boards are essential partners working with elected officials and city agencies, and play an important role in improving the quality of life for all New Yorkers. I am very proud of the work accomplished by Bronx CB. I am very proud of Bronx Community Board 7 and our ability to work with each other and our district manager to address the needs of our community. As volunteers we take our responsibility seriously. We face difficult times ahead so I hope the outcomes of this committee will lead to greater support and assistance for community boards.

Thank you

From: Francis Dsouza, [REDACTED], Bronx, NY 10460. [REDACTED]

Re: Term Limits for Community Board District Managers

I am opposed to term limits for the District Manager of Community Boards. The following are my reasons;

- 1) When someone stands for election, they do so with the full knowledge that they may not get elected in the next election. There is no guaranteed permanence to that electoral position. A District Manager is a civil service position. If they are going to be removed after a certain period of time, with no other comparable position being offered to them, one of two things will happen. People will not want the job or a District Manager will spend their time on the job creating IOU's to facilitate future employment. I feel that neither of these options are desirable. I understand the need for term limits, in general. I do not believe the District Manager position lends itself to that course of action.
- 2) I know the District Manager of my Community Board knows people in various city agencies and those people know her. When there is a problem with Sanitation, Police, Fire, HPD or so many other departments, she is able to pick up the phone, call the right person and the problem is frequently remedied. I am sure this skill is common in most, if not all, of the Community Boards. She also understands the strengths, weaknesses and unique characteristics of the geography and population of our Community Board. A new person coming in would take a long time to acquire those skills and during that time our community would regress. We are a community in dire need of attention and can ill afford a period of time when the person at the helm is not operating at full speed. Li

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Julio G. Pineda Jr.

Address: [REDACTED] Purdy St

I represent: Brx Community Board 9

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: NAMA DARR

Address: [REDACTED]

I represent: ARAB AMERICAN FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER

Address: 150 COURT STREET BROOKLYN, NY 11201

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Shawn Campbell

Address: [REDACTED]

I represent: BK CB 14

Address: _____

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

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 137 Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☒ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jeremy Langer

Address: [REDACTED]

I represent: BK CB 7

Address: [REDACTED]

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Celeste Leon, Brooklyn Community Board 4

Address: [REDACTED] Brooklyn, NY 11207

I represent: Myself

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 3730 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: George Torres

Address: [REDACTED] White Plains Rd

I represent: Community Board 12, Heliopsis

Address: [REDACTED] White Plains Rd, Bx, NY 1046

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

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Thomas Lucania

Address: Deputy Chief of Staff

I represent: Bronx Borough President

Address: Vanessa L. Gibson

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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

☒ in favor ☒ in opposition

Date: 6/16/2025

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ALLAN SWISHER

Address: 120-55 QUEENS BLVD.

I represent: QUEENS BP DONOVAN RICHARDS

Address: "

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1065 Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☒ in opposition

Date: 6/16/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: MARK DILLER

Address: [REDACTED]

I represent: COMMUNITY BOARD 2/MANHATTAN

Address: SAME

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

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Rafael Moore-Punnett

Address: _____

I represent: Bronx Community Board 6

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1095 Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☒ in opposition

Date: 6/16/2025

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jesús Pérez

Address: [REDACTED] Suite 1404

I represent: Manhattan CB6

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1134 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 6/16/2025

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Sabrina Zheng

Address: _____

I represent: CACF Student

Address: _____

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

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1134 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 6/16/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: LYOYD FENG

Address: 50 BROAD STREET

I represent: COALITION FOR ASIAN AMERICAN CHILDREN

Address: (CACE)

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1134 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 6/16/2025

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Emma Chen

Address: _____

I represent: CACE - student

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1134 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 6/16/2025

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kyae Sun Linn Cat

Address: _____

I represent: CACE - student

Address: _____

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

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1134 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 6/16/2025

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jason Lee

Address: _____

I represent: CAC - student

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1134 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: TERMIN CHA

Address: FLUSHING QUEENS

I represent: CACF

Address: 50 BOAD ST

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

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

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: LLOYD FENG

Address: 428 LORIMER STREET, BROOKLYN, NY 11206

I represent: BK CBI

Address: _____

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

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Robert G. Gorman

Address: 15 Starbuck St.

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1134 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 6/16/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: SARAH FAJARDO

Address: FLUSHING, NY

I represent: Korean American Family Service

Address: Flushing, NY Center

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1134 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 6/16/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kimberly Gae Rowell

Address: [REDACTED] 11377

I represent: Asians fighting injustice invisible no more

Address: 225 cherry st #1916 10002

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

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1134 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 6/16/25

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ashley Chen

Address: _____

I represent: Chinese - American Planning Council (CPC)

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Keisha Sutton James, Deputy BP

Address: _____

I represent: Manhattan Borough President

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

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

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Antonio Reynoso, BK Borough President

Address: _____

I represent: _____

Address: _____

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

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1134 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 6/16/2025

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Dumaina Benychya

Address: _____

I represent: MALIKAH

Address: 25-61 Steinway St

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

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1134 Res. No. _____

☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ALICE MO

Address: _____

I represent: HOMECREST COMMUNITY SERVICES

Address: 6915 15th Avenue, Bk, NY 11228

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