

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

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October 11, 2016
Start: 11:48 a.m.
Recess: 11:55 a.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E:

BEN KALLOS
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

David G. Greenfield
Mark Levine
Carlos Menchaca
Antonio Reynoso
Ritchie J. Torres
Joseph C. Borelli
Daniel Dromm
Margaret S. Chin

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

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COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

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[sound check]

[background comments]

[gavel]

CHAIRPERSON KALLOS: I'd like to call this Committee on Governmental Operations to order. Before I give my opening statement, I'd like to open the vote, if William Martin or Committee Clerk could allow Ritchie Torres to vote. Ritchie, if you could share you vote for the record.

COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: I vote aye.

[background comments]

CHAIRPERSON KALLOS: Good morning and welcome to the Committee on Governmental Operations; you can tweet me @BenKallos. Today we're holding a second hearing and vote on two introductions and a resolution, all of which were previously heard by this committee in May of 2015.

The first is Proposed Introduction 251-A, sponsored by Council Member Danny Dromm in relation to the collection of demographic data regarding ancestry and languages spoken. The proposed legislation would require certain agencies to provide to all persons served by those agencies a demographic information survey with questions regarding ancestry

2 and languages spoken. The aggregated data would be
3 made publicly available and agencies would be
4 required to reevaluate the ancestry and language
5 information collected in other forms used by those
6 agencies.

7 The second is Proposed Introduction
8 551-A, sponsored by Council Member Margaret Chin in
9 relation to the collection of demographic data
10 regarding multiracial identification. The proposed
11 legislation would include the collection of data on
12 multiracial ancestry or ethnic origin in the
13 aforementioned survey and reevaluation of agency
14 forms.

15 And finally, we'll also be voting on
16 Resolution 472, also sponsored by Council Member
17 Margaret Chin, which calls on the state and federal
18 government to amend their official forms and
19 databases to accommodate multiracial identification
20 in all instances where racial identification is
21 required.

22 If we are to properly serve a diverse
23 city, then we must have specific disaggregated data
24 about the populations living here; it's not
25 sufficient for us as policymakers to rely on

2 **[inaudible]** inaccurate categories when better and
3 more accurate data could and should be obtained by
4 our agencies. With these three pieces of
5 legislation, we hope to obtain that data and
6 ultimately better serve our communities.

7 I'd like to thank my colleagues, Council
8 Members Dromm and Chin for sponsoring their
9 legislation and to members of this committee, Council
10 Members Borelli; Greenfield [background comments] for
11 being here today. I'd like to also thank our new
12 counsel to this committee, Brad Reid, the former
13 counsel of this committee, Smita Deshmukh and the
14 counsel of the General Welfare Committee, Andrea
15 Vazquez and our Finance Analyst James Subudhi for the
16 work on these bills. I'd like to call on Council
17 Members Dromm; then Chin.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: Can I vote first?

19 [background comment]

20 CHAIRPERSON KALLOS: And we will open up
21 the roll again.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: I was
23 disenfranchised the first time, so I vote aye.

24 CHAIRPERSON KALLOS: Council Member
25 Dromm.

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COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Thank you very much Chair Kallos and also thank you to Committee Counsel Brad Reid, to Rachel Cordero, Laura Popa and to my counsel, Sebastian Maguire for their hard work on this legislation.

In order to determine how well the City is serving our diverse populations, we need to ask whom precisely the City is serving. This is a key question for policymakers and funders alike, and without data, communities are left without a critical advocacy tool.

This legislation is part of a package of bills that will require the updating of demographic forms at agencies serving New Yorkers. In particular, Int. 251-A will require that forms list the City's top 30 ethnicities and languages. This includes a disaggregation of the Asian category into Chinese, Korean, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladesh, and so on, but it also means that for the first time Arab, Dominican and Guyanese New Yorkers, among many others, will be able to see themselves reflected in City-collected demographic data. Significantly, this bill provides for a write-in option to aid in the identification of emerging communities.

2 Finally, this bill encourages the
3 analysis of collected data to enhance the design,
4 delivery and development of City services.

5 With the passage of 251-A, New York
6 City's myriad ethnic communities will be able to say
7 now we count. I encourage members of the Committee
8 to vote in the affirmative. Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON KALLOS: Just want to
10 interrupt for one moment. And tonight is Yom Kippur
11 and beforehand I just wanted to ask my colleague
12 David Greenfield for forgiveness for any things I
13 have done on purpose or by mistake to cause him
14 offense, as we go into the new year, in hopes that we
15 can be less interesting for Sally Solberg [sp?] to
16 tweet about.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Who can hold
18 anything against a punim face like that? No problem
19 **[inaudible]**... [crosstalk]

20 CHAIRPERSON KALLOS: Thank you. And if
21 Committee Clerk, William Martin could allow David
22 Greenfield to vote.

23 COMMITTEE CLERK: Council Member
24 Greenfield.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Aye.

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COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

CHAIRPERSON KALLOS: Council Member
Margaret Chin.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you. Good morning, I am Council Member Margaret Chin, the sponsor of Int. 551 and Reso 472, which require City agencies to modernize their data collection forms to allow New Yorkers to identify as multiracial or their specific ethnicity.

The bills we are voting on today are not just about boxes we check when filling out a government form; it's about recognizing the diversity which includes individuals who are multiracial but makes New York the greatest city in the world.

According to the 2010 census, more than half of New Yorkers are people of color; today more than 8% of marriages in the United States are interracial. With more than 320,000 residents, New York has one of the largest multiracial populations in the country. By allowing the people that we serve to check off their ethnicity as well as their race, City agencies can collect data more accurately; it would be essential for the City's abilities to make policy and deliver services to the populations that need it the most.

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I want to thank Chair Kallos for holding this vote; I also wanna thank Council Member Johnson and Kallos for introducing this bill with me and Council Member Dromm for being a staunch partner throughout the whole process, and I encourage my colleagues on this committee to vote aye. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON KALLOS: Thank you; proud to be a co-sponsor. I'd like to recognize we've been joined by Council Member Antonio Reynoso and ask Committee Clerk William Martin to please call the roll for all remaining members.

COMMITTEE CLERK: William Martin, Committee Clerk, roll call vote Committee on Governmental Operations; all items are coupled. Chair Kallos.

CHAIRPERSON KALLOS: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Reynoso.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Borelli.

COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: By a vote of 5 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions, all items have been adopted.

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COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

CHAIRPERSON KALLOS: I hereby
congratulate my colleagues and adjourn this meeting
of the Governmental Operations.

[gavel]

C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date October 24, 2016