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COMMITTEE ON FIRE AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT 1

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON FIRE AND EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT

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December 14, 2021  
Start: 11:05 a.m.  
Recess: 11:11 a.m.

HELD AT: REMOTE HEARING - VIRTUAL ROOM 2

B E F O R E: Joseph C. Borelli, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Justin L. Brannan  
Fernando Cabrera  
James F. Gennaro  
Alan N. Maisel

2 SERGEANT MARTINEZ: Cloud recording  
3 underway.

4 SERGEANT LEONARDO: Good morning, and  
5 welcome to today's remote New York City Council  
6 Hearing for the Committee on Fire and Emergency  
7 Management. At this time, we ask that all council  
8 members and staff please turn on their video for  
9 verification purposes.

10 To minimize disruptions, please place  
11 cell phones and electronic devices to vibrate or  
12 silent. We thank you for your cooperation. Chair,  
13 we're ready to begin.

14 CHAIRPERSON BORELLI: Good morning. This  
15 begins today's Committee Hearing on the Committee of  
16 Fire and Emergency Management. This is my last  
17 Committee Hearing as Chair, and it's been an honor to  
18 serve the people in this regard over the past four  
19 years. It's been exciting and challenging and fun,  
20 and the culmination of that work is what we're doing  
21 today, which is Proposed Intro 2430-A, which I am  
22 sponsoring at the request and cooperation with the  
23 Mayor of the City of New York. Passing this bill will  
24 complete the most recent revision cycle to the New  
25 York City Fire Codes. Amendments within this bill are

2 based on the 2015 edition of the International Fire  
3 Code as well as provisions to address issues unique  
4 to the New York City environment.

5 Among a host of upgrades to fire safety  
6 measures, the amendments include a comprehensive  
7 revision to requirements related to energy storage  
8 systems with the goal of establishing a regulatory  
9 framework to open the door to using lithium ion  
10 batteries and other new battery technologies to power  
11 buildings and building systems inside of the  
12 buildings while assuring appropriate fire safety.

13 The bill also establishes a regulatory  
14 framework for New York City's emerging distilled  
15 spirits industry. Booze. That's right. We're doing  
16 it today. We also authorize the use of hydrogen fuel  
17 cells to further the city's clean energy efforts and  
18 hundreds of other substantive and technical  
19 amendments.

20 I think the most important takeaway from  
21 this piece of legislation is that this is probably  
22 the most piece of legislation the City Council is  
23 passing in this term, and I say that because this is  
24 what will allow energy storage systems to finally be  
25 placed inside of buildings, whether they're Swell

2 Homes or high rises or apartments, and this will  
3 change fundamentally the City of New York's clean  
4 energy policy for the better.

5 I want to thank the Fire Department and  
6 other city agency as well as all the stakeholders and  
7 Council Staff for all the work they've done in  
8 finalizing this very important legislation, which has  
9 undergone extensive review and reflects a myriad of  
10 input from various industries and members of the  
11 public. Specifically, I want to thank Will Hongach  
12 (SP?) and Josh Kingsley for their work both on our  
13 behalf on the Council but also negotiating with the  
14 Fire Department. Most significantly, I welcome all  
15 of you to celebrate the passage of this bill in my  
16 backyard around my campfire with some distilled  
17 spirits because now all this is legal and possible in  
18 New York City so with that we will call the roll for  
19 our vote.

20 LEGISLATIVE CLERK: Thank you and good  
21 morning. This is the Committee on Fire and Emergency  
22 Management roll call vote on Proposed Intro 2430-A.  
23 We'll start with Chair Borelli.

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2 CHAIRPERSON BORELLI: My honor to vote  
3 yes on legalizing distilleries and fire pits. I love  
4 it.

5 LEGISLATIVE CLERK: Council member  
6 Cabrera?

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: I vote aye, and  
8 I want to thank the Chair for his leadership and for  
9 four wonderful years in partnership here working  
10 together on this powerful committee.

11 LEGISLATIVE CLERK: Thank you. Council  
12 member Maisel?

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MAISEL: Yes.

14 LEGISLATIVE CLERK: Council member  
15 Brannan?

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNON: On this historic  
17 legislation, I vote aye.

18 LEGISLATIVE CLERK: Council member  
19 Gennaro?

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GENNARO: Yes, I proudly  
21 vote aye and when I was Chair of the Committee on  
22 Environmental Protection from 2002 to 2013, this is  
23 the kind of bill with regard to energy storage that  
24 we could only dream of. That dream has now become a  
25 reality and I want to be associated with remarks of

2 the Chair who indicated that this is going to  
3 revolutionize energy storage systems, and, you know,  
4 by extension, you know, the way New York City does  
5 business and how we grow in a clean way and with that  
6 I think I already voted aye. Did I vote aye already?  
7 I can't remember, but I'm very excited about this and  
8 very proud of the Chair and look forward to working  
9 with him in the next term and I thank him for his  
10 good service to the city with this historic  
11 legislation. I vote aye for the third time.

12 LEGISLATIVE CLERK: Thank you. Chair  
13 Borelli, by a vote of five in the affirmative, zero  
14 in the negative and zero abstentions, the item is  
15 adopted.

16 CHAIRPERSON BORELLI: It was a close one.  
17 Distilleries are now legal. Hooray. This closes  
18 today's hearing. I thank you all, and I'll see you  
19 all tomorrow. [GAVEL]

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Do we know when we were  
21 adjourned?

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date January 27, 2022