

BOROUGH PRESIDENT GALE A. BREWER
TESTIMONY TO THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL
RELATIONS IN SUPPORT OF
CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 115 OF 2014
JUNE 9, 2014

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of New York City Council Resolution 0115-2014, introduced jointly by me and Councilmember Ben Kallos. This resolution is in support of legislation currently pending in Albany (S.4142 Lanza/A.2448 Rozic) and would amend the current statute by allowing Borough Presidents to appoint sixteen or seventeen year olds to serve on New York City community boards. This bill *does not require* such appointment; it simply allows for a more inclusive process at the discretion of the Borough President.

As the Manhattan Borough President, one of my responsibilities, as mandated by the New York City Charter, is the appointment of members to serve on our designated Community Boards. Community Boards have a variety of responsibilities that center on assessing the needs of their neighborhoods and addressing concerns and/or complaints raised by residents. My office, as well as those of the other Borough Presidents, therefore has an interest in seeking to appoint a diversity of individuals who reside, work, or who are actively involved in their communities to represent their districts.

Participation is completely voluntary, and the individuals who apply to serve on these boards—including youth—do so because they feel it is their civic duty and because they want to serve their neighbors. Currently, we are prevented from including youth as full participants on these boards. While sixteen and seventeen year olds can participate on youth committees, they are currently barred from serving as appointed Community Board members. At a time when we are struggling to combat youth disengagement and we are seeking to fund programs and activities that give our youth a place to grow and develop outside of the classroom, it seems counterintuitive for us to turn away youth who want to serve their communities in a more official capacity during their free time.

I have been fighting to lower the required age for Community Board appointments for years, having introduced the first resolution in 2008 when I served in the City Council. (Res 1348-2008 called on the State Legislature to lower the age). I hope this is the year we can finally provide the opportunity for Community Boards to include the important perspectives of youth as fully appointed Community Board members. I have worked with hundreds of interns over the years and have seen first-hand the meaningful role that young people can play in shaping policy and enhancing our neighborhoods. One of my former interns, Benjamin Howard-Cooper – whom you will hear from today - served on Community Board 7 as a young man before coming to work with me in my City Council office. He credits his time serving on CB 7 for inspiring him to pursue a career in public service, and he has gone on to a career in several city and state agencies. Based on my experience, I believe that young people like Benjamin Howard-Cooper can serve as fully appointed Community Board members as sixteen or seventeen year olds.

Allowing young people to become Community Board members would benefit the Boards by adding a youth perspective, diverse skills sets and by increasing the breadth of community representation. It would also promote civic participation among our youth. Studies have shown that early engagement leads to lifelong patterns of voting and continued civic participation.

Support for this proposal among elected officials, advocates, and Community Boards continues to grow. Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr., and Staten Island Borough President James Oddo have joined me in calling for the passage of this important legislation in Albany, and 15 members of the City Council have signed on as co-sponsors of the resolution before the Committee today. The proposal also counts many youth advocacy and service organizations among its proponents, including: the Police Athletic League, the Boy and Girl Scout Councils of NYC, the Children's Aid Society, Goddard Riverside Community Center, Washington Heights Youth Council, Rockaway Youth Task Force, and Generation Citizen - just to name a few. Many other cities have already lowered the age required of similar civil bodies, including San Francisco and Philadelphia.

Both the young people who are selected to serve and the communities those boards represent would benefit from this legislation, and we urge the State Legislature to enact this important bill that would allow us to broaden the perspectives on our Community Boards and encourage civic involvement by our youth. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today.



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Testimony of New York State Assemblywoman Nily Rozic

**Before the New York City Council Committee on Governmental Operations
Resolution 115 of 2014 calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass and the
Governor to sign into law A.2448 and S.4142, which would allow sixteen and seventeen
year olds to be appointed to New York City Community Boards**

**Hearing Date:
June 9, 2014**

My name is Assemblywoman Nily Rozic and I represent the 25th Assembly District in Queens, which includes Community Boards 7, 8, and 11.

I would like to thank Manhattan Borough President Brewer for her longstanding leadership on this issue, Chair Kallos, members of the Committee on Governmental Operations, and fellow supporters for holding today's hearing and offering representatives of our community and other interested parties the opportunity to provide testimony.

The idea of lowering the minimum age of appointment to a New York City Community Board to sixteen-years-old was first introduced in the State Legislature in 2008. The bill was featured in The New York Times where it was accompanied by the now well-known story of New York City Comptroller Scott Stringer's appointment to his local community board at at age of sixteen. Six years later, the minimum age is still eighteen, and concerns over the lack of youth civic engagement are rising.

Having served on my local Community Board—Community Board 8 in Queens—for a couple of years prior to being elected, I understand the importance of engaging in civic discourse early-on and how it can set a path for a future career in public service and policymaking.

Our 59 Community Boards are our neighborhood's first line of defense on a variety of issues including zoning matters, the city budget, youth services, and education system. As you know, it is also often the case that each Community Board has a youth committee where members discuss issues that affect young people. If the minimum age of appointment were lowered so that sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds could apply to serve, both Community Boards, its respective committees, and those appointed would benefit from a unique exchange of perspectives and ideas.

Bill A2448/S4142 that I co-sponsor with Senator Andrew Lanza of Staten Island would provide sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds with an opportunity to learn outside the classroom in a setting that would prepare them for a lifetime of civic participation whether it be as voters, community organizers, or even lawmakers.

To be clear, our bill would not mandate that Borough Presidents appoint sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds to Community Boards. If passed, it would make the option available to those who are interested in applying, and appointment by a Borough President would be limited up to two sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds per board.

Young people who want to be active in their neighborhoods should be able to look to Community Boards as an option, and not just to attend meetings, but to participate in its process. If Community Boards are going to truly represent their communities and the opinions presented before them, then membership should be expanded to sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds who are eager and ready to take on the responsibilities that would help shape them into our future leaders.

Youth civic engagement will continue to decrease unless we address the heart of the issue. This past Tuesday, June 3, 2014, the bill was reported out of the Committee on Governmental Operations with no objections and will soon be taken up by the entire Assembly. It is co-sponsored by thirty-two Assemblymembers from across New York City and by organizations such as Generation Citizen, the Police Athletic League, Inc., the Children's Aid Society, Harlem RBI, and United Neighborhood Houses.

Growing support for the bill shows that we value our youth and what they can contribute to better our communities. If passed, your resolution would add to this support as we continue to push for its passage this legislative session.

Thank you again for the opportunity to offer testimony and for your consideration of my comments.



**STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY BOARDS, STRENGTHEN COMMUNITIES:
Allow 16- and 17-Year-Olds to Serve on NYC Community Boards**
Testimony to the New York City Council, Committee on Governmental Operations
Monday, June 9th, 2014

Community board members offer a valuable community service. Dedicated volunteers donate their time, energy, experience, and insight to identifying and tackling pressing community issues. The stronger the members, the stronger the boards, the stronger our communities.

Diversifying our boards by expanding membership to include exceptional 16- and 17-year-olds will benefit boards and the communities that they serve. I urge the Council to pass Resolution 115 in support of state legislation to amend the Public Officer's Law and to allow young people and their communities this valuable civic opportunity.

Young people will offer boards new perspectives on local problems. Sixteen and seventeen year olds see their neighborhoods and use its services – schools, businesses, and public spaces – differently than adults do. They can offer new insights on and solutions to entrenched local issues.

The nonprofit with which I work, Generation Citizen, charges middle and high school students with analyzing and tackling relevant school, neighborhood, and city-based problems. Every semester, they are capable of both identifying serious and relevant community concerns and taking strategic and creative action to address them. Our students have mobilized their peers in lobbying for pedestrian safety legislation; they have created school curricula to stem bullying incidents on their campus. When told that their voices are valuable and respected, young people can and do, and will, speak up. And we all stand to benefit from listening to what they have to say.

Young people will publicize community board activities and responsibilities to new audiences. Rather than bemoan lack of youth political participation, let's take advantage of the opportunity to stimulate discussion about local political structures and happenings by empowering young leaders to teach and rally their peers. Youth leaders offer community boards the opportunity to access significant proportions of their communities that they currently don't have an easy entry to influence – young people. Furthermore, habits of political participation are set early. In order to build an informed and involved electorate, we should be promoting civic engagement from the time that young people are in school, learning explicitly about governmental processes and experimenting with their own role in influencing these structures.

For that matter, expanding community board membership offers a unique opportunity to identify and train future civic leaders. Rather than wait for our young people to leave the neighborhoods where they were born and raised to build connections with new communities, at college or around future places of employment, let's solidify these ties while we can. Let's allow our best and brightest the opportunity to



give back to the communities which have raised them, and let's support them in building their civic competencies so that they are successful leaders for us now and into the future.

Lastly, youth participation will remain optional for boards. Boards who do not wish to welcome youth to their ranks can continue to not do so; no part of this resolution or its accompanying state legislation forces any community board to change their structures or membership. Certain boards' reticence, however, should not prevent other boards from taking this important step in valuing youth voice and in diversifying their representation. There is no reason to unilaterally deprive boards of this opportunity.

I urge you to vote yes on Resolution 115. Let community board membership be the decision of the community – and for those who are willing, let young people have a voice at the table.

*Sarah Andes
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TO: Government Operations Committee - New York City Council

Hon. Ben Kallos, Committee Chair, and esteemed committee members

RE: Testimony in support of Resolution 0115-2014

Calling for an Amendment to New York State Public Officer Law, which would allow for appointment of fully vetted 16 and 17 year olds to Community Boards.

My name is Al Kurland, and I currently serve as a Contracts and Compliance Manager for the Police Athletic League. Before serving in this capacity with PAL, I also served as a founding Center Director for a full time program in the Armory in Washington Heights, and as a director for our teen leadership and work readiness program called IN-STEP. My life of volunteer service and work with teens began in 1984, stewarding two all volunteer youth programs - Southern Heights: Communities Organized for Public Service, an extended day and teen leadership program, (in the 1980's) and the Ivy League: Uptown WINS, an education and sports program for girls. (in the 1990's)

I provide testimony today, based not only on my years of study, research and learning about the efficacy of teen leadership and civic involvement, but also as a witness to the actual contributions of youth over the years, which have contributed so deeply both to their personal growth, as well as to the sustainability and growth of challenged yet vibrant communities. It is my earnest hope that this Council provide a resolution of support (Reso 0115-2014), and thus catch our city up to the best civic practices already in place for decades in other cities. I feel that New York City is not a place that should fall behind the curve, but as been practiced by our constituents and leaders for quite a while, be a center of civic engagement that sets the pace and becomes the leading edge for dynamic partnerships between youth and older adults.

THE DEEPER LEARNING ABOUT QUALITY TEEN ENGAGEMENT/ WHY I AM HERE TODAY

When I first started leading youth programs in Washington Heights, the neighborhood was filled with people providing rich resources and leadership, but at the same time a community besieged with an out of control illegal drug trade and massive violence. Most folks were wary about even opening their doors, let alone making their way to meetings or programs promoting the social good. The Southern Heights program had a very modest budget (\$9,100 annually), and only 1 unpaid adult on staff, myself. It served about 120 youth daily with a variety of education, sports and leadership components, including about 20 very active and dedicated teens. They were, in fact, my staff. In addition to providing basic services, this program also became emerged in partnership and coalition activities in the neighborhood.

For instance, we engaged with the Young Men's Clinic, sponsored by the Center for Population and Public Health (Columbia University). Although a sorely needed resource, their outreach efforts resulted in meager and inconsistent attendance by young men. After designing an engagement program between Health Educations and our teen leaders, this trend was reversed, as teen voice and endorsement for the program spread. Soon, the problem became not finding young men to attend, but

rather finding additional funding to service the increasing demand for Health services. The point here is that teens, when partnered with caring and committed adults, can become, and have become, essential to the promotion and sustaining of valuable community resources. Equally important is the effect that participation had on the outcomes for teen volunteers themselves. What I learned, over time, was that the busier and more committed these young folks became, the better they became masters of time management. Despite what seemed to be impossible scheduling, grades improved, and high school graduation was common and prevalent.

The Ivy League experience from the 1990's produced similar good outcomes, even in programming with a more specialized mission – that of promoting exercise and health for girls using a sports format, as well as incorporating educational workshops and experiences. As with Southern Heights, funding was very modest, and I was joined by two female adult staff members who worked on a part time basis. For all of us, our energy, and our leadership corps, was comprised by two teen leadership groups. The first, called Female Finesse, worked on coordinating workshops with the sports schedules, and in partnering with agencies, such as the Girl Scout Council of New York City, and the Woman's Sports Foundation in delivering quality education intervention on sports, health, and Title IX. The second cohort, a teen program run by our close partner, (The Uptown Dreamers), was called Coaches Who Care. They served as captains, roles models and inspiration for 200 younger girls in their endeavor to try and enjoy health exercise, as well as a sports experience honoring effort, and the right to try.

Finally, one other aspect of this deeper impact, was the learning experience that I, as well as other adult staff and volunteers, experienced as a result of working with these teen leaders. Not only did they have to integrate a very high level of program commitment with the demands of school and their own families, they also had to learn to work with, communicate with, and cooperate with youth and adults from a diversity of backgrounds - Dominican American, African American, West African and Haitian. Despite the tensions that often drove people apart, or left them isolated, these young folks not only learned about, but created a dynamic and creative problem solving team. In addition, amongst those who were MOST active, we saw not only high school graduation, but admission to fine colleges, often with substantial scholarships, and in turn graduation into careers of human services - Health Professionals, Law Enforcement Officers, and leaders in other youth programs.

I feel that this witness to my early years with teen leadership lends evidence to a proposition, which is that one cannot deny the capability of teens to provide extensive, time intensive service over long periods of time, while at the same time maintaining their personal and educational commitments, when, as was evident in my own experience, they have already done so, over, and over, and over again. These teens could be called, in a sense extraordinary. There are some teens today, with a keen interest in civic engagement at a local level, and possible careers in public service and government, who also demonstrate similar capacity. Our willingness to incorporate their talents, intelligence and commitment would, in some way, echo a sentiment of Thomas Paine, who claimed that each generation has an inherent right to govern and decide, as a new generation, and not be subject to governance decisions made from the grave. (Which is not to say , of course, that at times community

boards might appear as graveyards). As happened with teens and adults in my cited scenarios, very dedicated adults, and committed teens co mentored each other, widening perspective, sharing the work load, and committing to positive community outcomes. Community Boards could further enhance their roles as "Communities of Conscience" at a local government level.

THE PERSISTENCE OF RESISTANCE (To teens as valued civic partners): COUNTERPOINTS :

Despite years of research documenting the value of teen contribution to their communities, and for social/educational gains for themselves (eg the Surdna Foundation; CIRCLE), and years of these practices in other cities, such as in San Francisco, Philadelphia and Hampton , Virginia, beliefs persist concerning the lack of abilities, lack of preparation, or just downright issues of immature development. Even though Mia Shakelford, who served for two years in her final years of high school on the San Francisco Youth Commission shines as a model of efficacy - she served as Commission Chair, mastered 4 AP courses, high grades, and helped to spearhead changes in municipal policy specifically beneficial to youth in creative ways - stereotypes persist. I would hold that just as the gains we have made on the long and winding road to deep democracy take time, that they are accompanied by challenges to the right of inclusion, to narratives, sometimes of social meanness, but also often by stories/opinions which are well intentioned but full of informed ignorance.

During the 1700's , at the dawn of our great experiment in democracy, Mary Wollstonecraft challenged the hypocrisy of allowing for men's participation, but not women's , in political affairs. She complained, in her work on the Political Rights of Women, about both tyrants and sensualists, who treated women as slaves and playthings. Most, in the political community, and the scientific community at that time, could not yet hear her logic or her voice. In the next century, WEB DuBois would eloquently lay out the peculiar travesty of living with a double consciousness, your own valid one which would remain discredited and repressed, and the adoption of one promoted by your oppressors in their efforts to deny your own eyes. Overcoming this is often a lifelong task, akin to one I noted in an Occupy Wallstreet poster - Real Eyes Realize Real Lies. Our media, and our politicians , have ever to often been eager to sell the mythology. As noted by Thomas Paine, this results in "situations of confusion and despair, where councils have no fixed character, and every day seems to be a storm of its own, where men, beaten but not humble, act like men trembling at fate, and catching straws." Today we could call this "wilding". After decades of media panics and exceeding high rates of youth imprisonment, only now are we beginning to awake from the Great fear generated by our law enforcement myths and Criminal Injustice Policies. Even in the health and human service fields, researches and policy tanks got into the act. As noted by Dr. Mike Males, in his analysis of policies in California, the great panics (ie teen pregnancy and teen smoking) detailed not so much abhorrent teen behavior, but rather teen behavior that reflected trends , both up and down, of the corresponding adult population. In our society, we adults seem too adept at viewing teens with conflicting visions, models of idealism and beauty, as well as monsters in our midst, sporting underdeveloped brains and raging hormones. Teens, with identical hormonal issues, but living in other cultures, exhibit anti social and impulsive rates of behavior to a much lesser degree. Makes me wonder, raging hormones, are they the issue, or is it issues of raging at our own aging.

Finally, what about those underdeveloped frontal lobes? Unfortunately, this is an issue that is cherry-picked, whether consciously or unconsciously, by otherwise well-intentioned adults. This course of development is true for 12-year-olds, for 16-year-olds, and for 24-year-olds. So why do 18 and 21-year-olds, with still-developing lobes, get the right to vote and participate, but not 16-year-olds. I think that the late Stephen Jay Gould, in his brilliant taking apart of the Bell Curve (which suggested the mental inferiority of black peoples) shone a light on some of the poorer practices of interpreting scientific findings. In this book (*The Mismeasure of Man*) he shows how reductionism and inappropriate applications of isolated experiments lead to inherently flawed public understanding and social policy, usually to the benefit of elitists and others who benefit from inequality and deep divisions of social hierarchy. Perhaps, because it appears to be scientifically "proven", peoples of otherwise good conscience unwittingly adopt these beliefs. Alice Miller, the late noted developmental psychologist, also shone some light on this, in her classic book, *For Their Own Good*. In her essay, the "vicious cycle of contempt" she adeptly states: "Contempt is a weapon the weak, and a defense against our own despised and unwanted feelings. It is the fountainhead of all contempt, all discrimination, in the more or less conscious, uncontrolled exercise, and secret exercise of power over the child, by the adult, which is tolerated by society". As is the case with under the radar racism, sexism and nativism, these deeper issues will take time, and conscious work to understand and to overcome. In a similar vein, I believe that the practice of Adultism, the elevation of adults at the expense of diminished and devalued youth, will take time also. I also believe, as opportunities for teen civic participation become more mainstream, and adult-teen partnerships expand, that both public perception and unconscious belief will evolve to include acceptance of teen value in civic affairs.

OUR CRIES AND BELOVED COMMUNITIES: WHAT IS IN IT FOR ALL OF US?

Severn Cullis-Suzuki, a spokesperson at the Earth Summit in Rio De Janeiro in June of 1992 (a 12-year-old child of world-renowned biologist and social activist David Suzuki (*The Sacred Balance*)) had this to say: "I am only a child, and I don't have all the solutions, but I want you to realize, neither do you. You don't know how to fix the holes in the ozone layer, or how to bring Salmon back upstream. You can't bring back what was once a forest, and is now a desert. If you don't know how to fix it, please stop breaking it...". An eloquent outcry for one so young, but also a testament to the perception and vision owned by the young. Possibly a hint that the future of our city, our country, and our planet, which will be solely inherited by the young, could be positively affected by their participation today. Sometimes this may be participation which is negotiated with a sense of outcry, even outrage, but this is okay. As stated by Norman Douglas, "Distrust of Authority should be our first civic duty". Just as this attitude lay at the foundation of our Declaration of Independence, perhaps it would aid in joint declarations of interdependence.

Today, in New York City, we have agencies, serving teens, and led by teens, which are lending to the development of safe, creative and vibrant community. From the Rockaway Youth Task Force in the Rockaway Peninsula, to Island Voice on Staten Island, from the IS 218 Teen Advisory Board in East New York, to the Washington Heights and Inwood Youth Advisory Council in Uptown Manhattan, teens and their loyal adult mentors have been effecting positive change for years. Amongst the brightest and most committed of these already shining examples of civic service, lay the potential for Young All Stars

on our Community Boards. We also have agencies, which operate city wide, that are expanding the horizons of teens, and training them in civic advocacy and community project development. Even with all my research, and past history, it has been a few years since I have had direct connection to teen leadership and community building. It was for me an honor and a pleasure to cofacilitate teen advocacy trainings led by the Citywide Director of an agency called Generation Citizen. I am at the cornerstone of now turning the age of 65, and to see this Director(herself only less than half my age, as is her Executive Director, who builds similar models across the US), engage with enthusiastic participants in an open and sharing environment, was awe inspiring. In only the course of 90 minutes, they were not only introduced to Community Boards and our campaign, but we were introduced to such a thoughtful group of students who really "got it". At one particular training, modeled on their advocacy training sessions related to developing Action Civics programs in schools across the city (a session at the Queens Community House Beacon in Forest Hills), students quickly made connections between the Campaign for Children experiences in keeping their center open, and keeping avenues of participation open to teens at Community Boards. We have the resources, both through our Community Boards, and through our community programs, to grow and develop leaders, not just for the future, but for NOW. (I like to refer to Generation Citizen as GenZen, as in Zen, one must be in the present moment to cultivate the future). As well articulated by Grace Lee Boggs, an activist now 101 years YOUNG: " The world is always being made, but never finished; activism is a journey, and not a destination; we need to struggle not in confrontation, but in the reach for the common good. We should value small, incremental action within our exquisitely inter-connected world." In order to bring this to blessed fruition, within our blessed communities, I think we need to pay heed to the words of Nelson Mandela also, especially as it relates to our attitudes towards teens. To paraphrase: " It is okay(for teens) to be brilliant, gorgeous, handsome, talented and fabulous....so that they can liberate themselves from their fears, and with their presence to help liberate others."

Testimony and Witness, given with thanks, and my desire for blessings for you.

Al Kurland, PAL Contract and Compliance Manager

Teens on Board Volunteer

Petra Foundation Fellow



THE COALITION FOR ASIAN AMERICAN CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

**Committee on Governmental Operations
June 9th, 2014**

**Testimony of Michael Muyaide
Asian American Student Advocacy Project (ASAP) Youth Leader,
The Coalition for Asian American Children and Families (CACF)**

Good Morning. My name is Michael Muyaide, and I am a youth leader from the Asian American Student Advocacy Project (ASAP) under the Coalition for Asian American Children and Families (CACF). We would like to thank Chair Kallos and members of the Government Operations Committee for holding this important oversight hearing on calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign into law A.2448 and S.4142, which would allow sixteen and seventeen year olds to be appointed to New York City Community Boards.

CACF is the nation's only pan-Asian children's advocacy organization, and works to improve the health and well-being of Asian Pacific American (APA) children and families in New York City in three key policy areas: education, health and child welfare. ASAP, a youth leadership project, comprises of NYC public high school students from all five boroughs. It has been a program under CACF for the past ten years working to empower youth people to learn to make positive changes in education through advocacy.

I would like to take this opportunity to state that ASAP supports laws A.2448 and S.4142 believe that it will have long term positive impacts on college-readiness for our next generation of all the communities in NYC. I am also here today to represent my fellow ASAP members and to testify and highlight challenges of APA youth in NYC public schools and how ASAP has worked to address those issues as an example of high school youth that are making positive changes for their community.

As today's hearing is focused on youth involvement in community action, we would also like to take this opportunity to address issues within the APA community, and highlight our needs and concerns. Currently, **29% of APA's live in poverty, the highest of all racial groups in NYC, and APAs have the highest rate (42%) of linguistic isolation, meaning that no one over the age of 14 in a household speaks English well.**

Many studies have analyzed the correlation between poverty in the community and education attainment and success. For APA youth, many face the challenges of coming from low-income backgrounds; in addition, many also face the issues of being the first in their families to attend schools in this country. **In public school, 1 out of 5 Asian Pacific American students is an English Language Learner.** As immigrants, or being children of immigrants, many APAs face the daunting challenges of learning how to navigate the education system, learn English, and stay on track to graduate and to be "college ready".

As there are certain pervasive notions that Asian Americans are doing well and do not need support or assistance, we are here today to provide a clearer understanding on how to fully support our community. Currently, **1 out of 4 Asian Pacific American high school students do not graduate on time or at all.** It is

important when considering the realities of these numbers to notice that many in our community come from working class and/or immigrant families. These social circumstances impact the development of APA youth, which currently make up approximately 14% of the New York City public school population.

As one can see, APA youth in NYC face many challenges that impact their education. In ASAP, we work to identify issues in the community, develop solutions and we advocate for improvements. **In our work, we conducted research in our communities and ASAP realized that the quality of student support provided by guidance programs in New York City public schools is different at every school.** Not all schools have the same type of guidance program, which impacts the types of support that youth experience. Many APA youth who come from immigrant families struggle to get the support they need at home to navigate high school since their parents are either not home, working all the time, or do not understand the school systems themselves. One of the ways I played a meaningful role in my community was through my involvement with ASAP. Recognizing the issues of APA youth, ASAP developed a college and career readiness campaign called: *Campaign Bridge*, to better support youth to be post-high school ready. In Campaign Bridge we have identified a list of recommendations that focus on reforming current guidance counseling roles to help ensure all students have the guidance they need to be college and career ready. We have brought together various youth from all 5 boroughs to testify at press conference and met with key DOE and Education committee members in regards to our campaign.

With these points in mind, it is paramount that laws such as A.2448 and S.4142 should be passed as it would provide youth similar opportunities to work in their communities to meaningfully resolve issues and being a community board member is a great path to groom future leaders.

It has been made known that the Scott Stringer, the former Manhattan Borough president and current city comptroller, served in his uptown community board at age 16; if he did it, so can today's youth. These laws will give youth the opportunity to participate in community action and form positive change, just as he did. ASAP has utmost confidence in that passing such laws are the first step in giving youth a voice and giving them a meaningful role in their neighborhoods.

Through my involvement in ASAP, I felt a sense of community, leadership, and weight to my decisions. I feel that if youth are allowed in community boards, they will experience the same. Not only that, but it will help prepare youth for leadership roles in the future: in their schools, in their families, and most importantly, in their community.

We would like to commend members of this committee that have been so supportive and invested to ensure that all New York City youth have the opportunity to voice their opinions and get involved in community boards. ASAP believe that youth are just as important as decision-makers, and if given the role, it will have a positive impact on the community. Thank you for giving us this opportunity to speak to you all today.

ASIAN AMERICAN STUDENT ADVOCACY PROJECT (ASAP)
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ASAP 2014

Year End Community

Briefing

FRIDAY, JUNE 13, 2014

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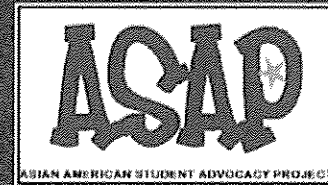
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GABRIELA ROSA
Assemblywoman 72nd District

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Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic &
Asian Legislative Caucus
Legislative Women's Caucus

Testimony before the New York City Council Committee on Governmental Operations
Hearing on Resolution 0115-2014
June 9, 2014

Dear Chairman Kallos & Committee Members:

As the representative for New York's 72nd Assembly district, which comprises the Northern Manhattan neighborhoods of Washington Heights, Inwood and Marble Hill, and as a co-sponsor of Assembly bill A.2448, I respectfully urge the Council to take up and pass Resolution 0115-2014. Assembly bill A.2448 and its Senate companion bill, S.4142, would allow 16- and 17-year-olds to serve on local community boards, which in turn would promote civic engagement among young people and provide community boards with a fuller understanding of the needs of that segment of the population. I hope the City Council will add its voice to mine and many of my colleagues' in calling for the passage of these bills into law.

The Community Board is the most local form of government, and it serves as a means to give residents a voice in decisions ranging from land use to economic development to the delivery of government services in their neighborhoods. These decisions directly impact young people, who make up roughly one-fifth of the population of the City of New York, but the current age restriction prevents these same young people from participating in the decision-making process.

A.2448 and S.4142 would also provide young people the opportunity to affect change in their communities and government, thus encouraging them to remain active participants in our democratic process. Sadly, young people are less likely to vote in local elections than national ones. This may be due to a lack of familiarity with candidates, their positions and the impact of government on their day-to-day lives. Passage of this legislation has the potential to curb voter apathy among young New Yorkers.

As the mother of a 16-year-old myself, I urge the City Council to act swiftly to pass this resolution in hopes that it will convince more of my colleagues in the state legislature to do the right thing by our young people.

Testimony before the New York City Council Committee on Governmental
Operations

Hearing on Resolution 0115-2014

June 9, 2014

As a previous youth-member of New York City Community Board 7, and a life-long resident of the City, I respectfully urge the Council to take up and pass Resolution 0115-2014. We often hear that “all politics are local”, and as the community board is the most local form of government, it is one of the purest and most accessible forms of democratic participation. In order to embrace the spirit of inclusiveness and community, youth participation on the boards should not only be tolerated, but also encouraged. While I was only 15 when I was initially appointed to the board, my record demonstrates a strong commitment to the board and its activities. I was elected by my peers to serve on the executive committee as co-secretary, and provided influential feedback on the various committees on which I served. I hope the City Council will add its voice to the growing consensus that it is time to formally accept and encourage youth participation on the city’s community boards.

The experience of serving on the board was an important stepping-stone to my current career in government. The ownership and responsibility that my time on the community board provided were important experiences that helped encourage me to enter public service. Without my time on the board, I don’t know if I would have been able to decide that government was a worthwhile career choice.. As government faces the daunting question of how to encourage youth to enter its ranks, the community board stands out as an obvious training ground for future leaders. The experience provided me with strong leadership and consensus-building skills, which have already proved valuable at this early stage in my career.

Detractors might argue that youth do not have the capacity to successfully consider weighty issues such as rezoning or the distribution of social services at the neighborhood level. However, my participation, along with many of the other young board members demonstrates quite the opposite. My colleagues and I have demonstrated young board members can speak to issues beyond the classroom, and can have important insights into every issue that comes before the board.

I urge the City Council to take action on this resolution in hopes that it will send a strong message to the State legislator that it is time to formally include youth participation on New York City community boards.

Thank you for your consideration,

Benjamin Howard-Cooper
bhcooper@gmail.com

From: Queens Community Board 11 <cb11q@nyc.rr.com>

Date: June 9, 2014 at 1:52:26 PM EDT

Subject: RE: New York City Council Hearing in the Governmental Operations Committee

Reply-To: <cb11q@nyc.rr.com>

To the Government Operations Committee:

Christine L. Haider, Chair of Community Board 11 in Queens asked me to send this reply regarding Reso 115.

Community Board 11 revisited this proposal to allow sixteen and seventeen years olds to be appointed to Community Boards. This was first introduced in 2008. The vast majority of CB 11 members did not support this legislation. Members spoke against the proposal at that time and stated that sixteen year olds are not mature enough nor have enough life experience to vote on decisions that affect all of the community. Other members thought that these young people should and will concentrate on school issues and may even then have to leave the board to attend college.

Susan Seinfeld
District Manager
for

Queens Community Board 11
46-21 Little Neck Pkwy.
Little Neck, NY 11362
718 225-1054

June 9, 2014

My name is Henry Euler and I have been a member of Community Board 11 in Queens for the past 9 years. I am also First Vice President of my civic association.

I was concerned when I heard about the legislation that would permit 16 and 17 year olds to serve on community boards in our city. I believe that young people should be involved with their community and aware of issues facing their neighborhood. However, I do not feel that most minors have the knowledge or background to make decisions regarding cases that come before community boards such as land use cases and other matters.

When a person reaches the age of 18, they become eligible to vote. I think that by that age, many young people have the maturity to serve their community by joining a community board. Before that age, I would say that those young people who show interest in joining a community board should be allowed to attend community board meetings and committee meetings and ask questions and express their opinions, but not vote on cases. When they turn 18, then they should be allowed to apply for community board membership, if they choose to do so. It would be to their advantage to show interest and some knowledge of the community board process before they reach 18, as it would be evidence to those who select community board members that this particular person has shown involvement with their community and therefore would make a good community board member.

I would ask that this committee reject Resolution 0115-2014 that would call for the state legislature to pass and the Governor to sign into law A. 2448/S. 4142 to allow 16 and 17 year olds the right to serve on community boards in the City of New York.

Thank you for letting me testify today on this matter.

Henry Euler

204-05 43 Avenue

Bayside, NY 11361-2617

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 0115-2014

in favor in opposition

Date: 6/9/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Bobby Digi

Address: _____

I represent: Island Voice Inc

Address: 36 Hamilton St NYC 10304

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 0115-2014

in favor in opposition

Date: June 9, 2014

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Francesca Chaney

Address: 139-16 Linden Blvd Queens NY

I represent: PAL-Beacon (Brooklyn)

Address: 370 Fountain Ave, Brooklyn NY

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 0115-2014

in favor in opposition

Date: 6/9/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Elie Elouadi

Address: 77 George St in 299 NYC

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. 0115-2010 Res. No. 2

in favor in opposition

Date: 6/9/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Sarah Zeller-Berkman, PhD

Address: 121 Avenue of the Americas

I represent: The Youth Development Institute

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: 6/9/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ramon T. Spence

Address: 991 Longwood Ave

I represent: PAL

Address: 991 Longwood Ave

**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: Milan Taylor

Address: 1920 Mott Ave

I represent: The Rockaway Youth Task Force

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: Gale Brewer

Address: _____

I represent: Manhattan Borough President

Address: 1 Centre St 19th floor

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. C215-2014

in favor in opposition

Date: 6/9/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Damaris Dunn

Address: _____

I represent: Boys and Girls HS

Address: 1700 Fulton Street

**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: JUNE 9, 2014

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: FRANCINE BARAS

Address: 205 East 69th St NYC

I represent: Fulton Voters Assn

Address: 205 East 69th St NYC

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: David Ng

Address: _____

I represent: Assemblywoman Nily Rozić

Address: 159-16 Union Tpke Flushing NY 11366

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. 115

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Sarah Andes

Address: _____

I represent: Generation Citizen

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: Michael Moyalde

Address: 36 Greenwich Way New Hempstead NY 10977

I represent: CACF & ASAP

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: David Crenshaw

Address: 600 W. 161 St

I represent: Uptown Dreamers Alumni Association

Address: 600 W. 161 St. NY NY 10032

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 0115 Res. No. 0115-2014

in favor in opposition

Date: June 9, 2014

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Rozella G. Clyde

Address: 33 Carmine Street

I represent: myself - I am a retired SS teacher -

Address: in adolescent behavior

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 0115 Res. No. 0115-2014

in favor in opposition

Date: June 9, 2014

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Bonnie Howard - Cooper

Address: 633 3rd Ave

I represent: self

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. 0115-2014

in favor in opposition

Date: 6/9/14

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: ALAN SCHULMAN
Address: 114 WINDSOR PLACE BKLYN N.Y. 11215
I represent: CENTER FOR STUDY & PRACTICE OF SOCIAL STUDIES
Address: (CSPSS)

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. ~~0115~~ Res. No. 0115-2014

in favor in opposition

Date: 6/9/14

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: Al Kurland
Address: 34 1/2 E 12 Street NY NY 10002
I represent: A.P.C. on Board
Address: 34 1/2 E 12 Street NY NY 10002

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