

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION

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September 12, 2019

Start: 10:12 a.m.

Recess: 10:20 a.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: CARLOS MENCHACA  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Margaret S. Chin  
Daniel Dromm  
Mathieu Eugene  
Mark Gjonaj  
I. Daneek Miller  
Francisco P. Moya

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

2 [sound check] [background comments/pause]  
3 [gavel]

4 CHAIRPERSON MENCHACA: Buenos dias,  
5 everyone. We are beginning our Immigration  
6 Committee voting and I want to welcome everyone. My  
7 name is Carlos Menchaca. I'm the Chair of the New  
8 York City Council's committee on Immigration. Today,  
9 the Committee on Immigration will be holding a second  
10 hearing and a vote on a package of legislation  
11 drafted in response to the Federal Administration's  
12 new rule regarding inadmissibility on public charge  
13 grounds. Some version of a Public Charge Rule has  
14 been in the news for more than 18 months. At the  
15 City Council here we have the threat of an expanded  
16 Public Charge Rule very seriously. We consider it  
17 our responsibility as Council Members to use out  
18 legislative authority to respond thoughtfully to the  
19 needs of our constituents, and this city is a city  
20 for all—all New Yorkers. Regardless of your  
21 background you belong here, and that is why the  
22 committee is voting today on a package of legislation  
23 that will ensure that correct information about the  
24 rule and existing city supports is discriminated as  
25 quickly and efficiently as possible. A quick

2 reminder. If you or someone you know has any  
3 questions, any questions at all about whether Public  
4 Charge Rule applies to them, please check our expert  
5 legal advice immediately. Please seek out expert  
6 legal advice immediately. The Council, the Mayor's  
7 office of Immigrant Affairs, our community partners  
8 on the ground are all committed to ensuring that no  
9 New Yorker feels pressured to disenroll from critical  
10 benefits with speaking with a trusted lawyer first,  
11 and you can call the New Americans Hotline at 1-800-  
12 566-7636 or Action NYC at 1-800-354-0365 right now to  
13 speak to someone about public charge. I urge you to  
14 call, please. Trusted lawyers are there ready to talk  
15 to you. Today's legislative package strengthens a  
16 social services network that has become a national  
17 model for how to care for and empower everyone.  
18 Proposed Intro sponsored by myself would require the  
19 Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs to conduct  
20 training on the provisions included in the new Public  
21 Charge Rule to employees in the Department of Social  
22 Services, Human Resources Administration, the  
23 Department of Homeless Services, the Department of  
24 Housing, Preservation and Development, and the New  
25 York City Housing Authority. The next Preconsidered

2 Intro sponsored by Council Member Moya would require  
3 the Department of Social Services to distribute  
4 information by mail-email regarding all city-funded  
5 emergency food programs to individuals whose SNAP  
6 cases have closed on or after January 1, 2016, and  
7 before their benefits recertification deadline.

8 Preconsidered—the next Preconsidered Intro sponsored  
9 by Council Member Rivera would require the Mayor's  
10 Office of Immigrant Affairs to create educational  
11 materials on the Public Charge Rule and the  
12 Department of Education would be required to  
13 distribute those materials and make them available to  
14 every DOE school for students and parents, and the  
15 next proposed intro sponsored by Council Member  
16 Cabrera would require the Human Resources  
17 Administration to ensure that individuals who contact  
18 the Human Resources Administration with questions  
19 about the federal regulations regarding public charge  
20 are provided with information about legal services  
21 provided by the city through partnership with  
22 Immigration service providers, and then last  
23 Preconsidered Intro sponsored by Council Member Levin  
24 calls on the U.S. Congress to take legislative action  
25 to stop the enactment of the new rule entitled

2 Inadmissibility on Public Charge Grounds. I want to  
3 thank you staff for their incredible work, and—and to  
4 prepare for this hearing. My Chief of Staff Lorena  
5 Lucero, Communications Director Anthony Chiarito, and  
6 the Committee staff Counsel to the Committee Harbon  
7 Josha (sp?) Committee Policy Analyst Elizabeth Cronk  
8 and Finance Unit Head Crilhien Francisco. Thank you  
9 all for your incredible work. This is not going to  
10 stop the work that we do here at the Committee, but  
11 I'm really thankful that the members of the committee  
12 were here—that are here Council Member Danny Dromm,  
13 Council Member Margaret Chin, Council Member  
14 Francisco Moya and Council Member Mathieu Eugene from  
15 Brooklyn, and Council Member Gjonaj from the Bronx.  
16 Did I get everybody. Okay, let's call the vote.

17 CLERK: William Martin, Committee Clerk,  
18 roll call vote Committee on Immigration. All items  
19 are coupled. Chair Menchaca.

20 CHAIRPERON MENCHACA: I vote aye.

21 CLERK: Eugene.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: I vote aye.

23 CLERK: Chin.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Aye.

25 CLERK: Dromm.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Aye.

3 CLERK: Gjonaj.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: I vote aye.

5 CLERK: Moya.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MOYA: Permission to  
7 briefly explain my vote.

8 CHAIRPERSON MENCHACA: Absolutely.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER GJONAJ: Thank you, Mr.  
10 Chairman and thank you to my colleagues. I just  
11 wanted to say that I would never regret someone who  
12 comes here in search of the American Dream, and works  
13 through blood, sweat and tears to turn that into a  
14 reality, but that's exactly what the Trump  
15 Administration is doing. The White House's well test  
16 for whom it deems a public charge will have a  
17 chilling effect on our legal immigrants. The very  
18 people living that quintessentially American story of  
19 perseverance through adversity. This rule change  
20 would deter immigrants from seeking the help that  
21 they need to support themselves and their families. A  
22 American citizens they're entitled to federal  
23 assistance and the same as anyone that is lucky to  
24 have been born within our borders. My bill would  
25 ensure that all those who disenrolled from SNAP or

2 whose SNAP benefits are set to lapse, will be given  
3 information on the emergency feeding programs. I  
4 want to take this opportunity to thank the chair,  
5 Speaker Johnson and my colleagues for supporting this  
6 bill, and the package of legislation to fight this  
7 bigoted public charge policy change. It's incumbent  
8 upon us to as elected officials to take care of all  
9 of our constituents regardless of their national  
10 origin or economic status. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and  
11 I will be voting aye.

12 CLERK: Bu a vote of 6 in the  
13 affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions,  
14 all items have been adopted by the committee.

15 CHAIRPERSON MENCHACA: Thank you for  
16 those votes and I want to repeat the Hotline if you  
17 or know—if you know anyone that has any questions  
18 about pubic charge, please make that call. 1-800-566-  
19 7636 to the New American Hot-Americans Hot Line or  
20 Action NYC at 1-800-354-0365 right now. Talk to a  
21 trusted lawyer. They're there. The city is providing  
22 that free of charge to you. Pleas make that call.  
23 Thank you. This hearing is now adjourned. [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 September 14, 2019