

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS

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CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS

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September 25, 2025

Start: 11:40 a.m.

Recess: 11:48 a.m.

HELD AT: 250 BROADWAY - 8TH FLOOR - HEARING
ROOM 1

B E F O R E: Pierina Ana Sanchez, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Shaun Abreu
Alexa Avilés
Eric Dinowitz
Oswald Feliz
Crystal Hudson
Lincoln Restler

OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS ATTENDING:

Julie Menin

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: This is a mic check,
this is a mic check on the vote on Housing and
Buildings. Today's date is November 25, 2025,
recorded by Walter Lewis in 250 Broadway, HR 3.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning. Welcome
to the New York City Council vote on the hearing on
Housing and Buildings.

At this time, please silence all
electronics and do not approach the dais.

Chair, you may begin.

CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [GAVEL] Thank you,
Sergeants. Good morning. I am Council Member Pierina
Sanchez, Chair of the Committee on Housing and
Buildings. Thank you to my Colleagues and members of
the public today who are here.

First, Introduction 621-A, sponsored by
Council Member Sandy Nurse, would expand the
definition of tenant harassment to include unlawful
evictions. Additionally, it would require the
Department of Housing Preservation and Development to
include as a part of a report due in February 2026 a
recommendation as to whether an owner's history of
unlawful eviction is a reliable criteria for the
Certificate of No Harassment Program. Although

functionally unlawful evictions are currently considered a form of tenant harassment, this legislation definitively closes any gaps in the New York City Administrative Code to ensure that landlords engaging in unlawful evictions are subject to penalties for harassing tenants.

Next, Intro. 1034-A, sponsored by Council Member Julie Menin, will ensure that older adults and individuals with disabilities participating in New York City Rent Freeze Program, known as SCRIE and DRIE, continue to receive their benefits without interruption by requiring the administering agencies to send notices to program participants that their benefits need renewal. Additionally, the bill would allow program participants to designate a third party, whether a family member, friend, or representative, to receive notifications on their behalf, ensuring any renters in need of assistance can remain up-to-date on their participation in the program and create proactive notices to landlords regarding program eligibility.

Finally, Intro. 429-A, sponsored by me, would make a number of changes related to plumbing work and the plumbing industry as a whole in New York

City. Several of those changes would be in relation to Local Law 152 of 2016, which created periodic inspection requirements of gas piping systems in response to a series of fatal gas explosions in the years prior, including a 2015 gas explosion in the East Village that leveled a building and killed two people that was caused by an illegal flexible hose attached to the gas line to divert gas to apartments within the building. This bill would amend the procedures for those gas piping inspections by requiring that the inspecting entity be either a licensed master plumber or a licensed journeyman plumber working under the direct supervision of a licensed master plumber. This bill would also amend the scope of inspections requiring gas piping inspections to include the point of connection with gas appliances. Additionally, this bill would change the definition of ordinary plumbing work to include the replacement of certain gas appliances, among other revisions, to extinguish ambiguities in the Administrative Code and align requirements with current practices.

Now, I just want to take a moment to be very clear about the revision relating to the

definition of ordinary plumbing work. The Council is codifying an essential clarification. All gas work, including the replacement of domestic gas appliances, must be performed by licensed master plumbers who are registered with and are required to regularly file their work with the Department of Buildings. This important clarification codifies existing practice, as I mentioned, and is a recognition of the dangerous nature of gas work. Relatedly, later today, I will be introducing Intro. 1321, an expansive reform to the existing Building Code, which builds on Intro. 429. The existing building code process was the product of a consensus-driven process that began in 2014 and was shaped by trade experts, building owner representatives, and City agencies. Intro. 1321 was drafted by the Department of Buildings and would further codify key elements of safety in our building systems, ensuring New Yorkers can trust the homes they live in. These changes, the changes contemplated in Intro. 429, are in line with the proposed changes in Intro. 1321. We're just doing a few things ahead of schedule. I look forward to continuing the collaborative processes with all stakeholders and my Colleagues on the Council. Our shared goal is clear

2 to deliver safe, dignified homes for every single New
3 Yorker.

4 I want to thank my team, Chief-of-Staff
5 Maria Villalobos; Deputy Chief Ben Ratner; Deputy
6 Chief Kim Castellanos; our Special Assistant Gerard
7 Fernandez and Carla Dominguez for their help on
8 today's hearing, and I'd like to give a special thank
9 you to Housing and Buildings Committee staff with
10 Senior Legislative Counsel Austin Malone, thank you
11 for all your work on this legislation, Legislative
12 Counsel Billy Eck (phonetic), welcome; Senior Policy
13 Analyst Jose Conde; Policy Analyst Dirk Spencer;
14 Finance Analyst Carla Naranjo (phonetic); and Data
15 Analyst Reese Hirota.

16 I'm joined today by Council Members
17 Abreu, Restler, Hudson, Menin, Dinowitz, and Council
18 Member Feliz on Zoom. Council Member Aviles, thank
19 you so much.

20 Before turning to the Clerk to call the
21 roll, I'd like to call on Council Member Menin to
22 speak on her legislation.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MENIN: Thank you so much,
24 Chair.

Amid the affordability crisis hitting New Yorkers, programs exist that many in the public are not aware of. Specifically, there are two that help alleviate rent increases for tenants while still giving landlords the rental increases that are owed to them. The Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption, SCRIE, and Disability Rent Increase Exemption, DRIE, are programs our City Council created that have New York City cover the difference between what you pay and what your landlord could legally charge you through a tax abatement credit. While over 135,000 households are eligible for the City's rent freeze program, only 61,260, to be exact, are currently enrolled in both programs. How can New Yorkers know about a vital rent freeze program to keep them in their homes if they don't even know it exists? I'm thrilled we'll be voting on my bill, Intro. 1034, which directs the Department of Finance to notify landlords that their tenants may be eligible for SCRIE or DRIE while providing property tax abatements in return. Our City must do more to quell the affordability crisis and help in promoting critical programs to benefit New Yorkers. Intro. 1034 is a transformative step to increase awareness of SCRIE

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2 and DRIE that will benefit our senior adult
3 population and persons with disabilities.

4 I want to thank drafter Jesse Fong and
5 thanks to my team, Jonathan Szott, Brandon Jordan,
6 Jack Lobel, and Mercedes Anderson. Thank you so much,
7 Chair.

8 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much,
9 Council Member Menin.

10 Any other comments from Colleagues on the
11 Committee?

12 Hearing none, I will now ask the Clerk to
13 call the roll.

14 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Good
15 morning. William Martin, Committee Clerk. Roll call
16 vote, Committee on Housing and Buildings. All items
17 are coupled. Chair Sanchez.

18 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Aye on all.

19 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Dinowitz.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Aye on all.

21 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Feliz.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: Aye on all.

23 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
24 you. Abreu.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: Aye.

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2 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Avilés.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILÉS: Aye.

4 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Hudson.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Aye.

6 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Restler.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER RESTLER: Aye.

8 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: With a
9 vote of seven in the affirmative, zero in the
10 negative, no abstentions, all items have been adopted
11 by the Committee.

12 Madam Chair, that is a full Committee.

13 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Clerk.

14 And with that, this hearing is adjourned.

15 [GAVEL]

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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 September 30, 2025