



sanitation

Jessica S. Tisch Commissioner

**Testimony of
Jessica Tisch, Commissioner
New York City Department of Sanitation**

**Hearing before the
New York City Council Committee on Sanitation & Solid Waste Management**

**Wednesday, June 15, 2022
12:00 P.M.**

**Oversight:
Intros 244, 274, 275, 280, & 281**

Good afternoon, Chair Nurse and members of the City Council Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management. My name is Jessica Tisch, and I am Commissioner of the New York City Department of Sanitation. I am joined today by Gregory Anderson, Deputy Commissioner for Policy and External Affairs, and Bridget Anderson, Deputy Commissioner for Recycling and Sustainability. Thank you for the opportunity to testify this afternoon on this package of important legislation related to the Department's zero waste efforts.

I would like to begin the hearing by first thanking Speaker Adams, Chair Nurse, and Brannan, and of course Mayor Eric Adams for prioritizing sanitation services in the FY23 adopted budget. The budget agreement announced last Friday commits \$40.6 million in new funding for Sanitation services in FY2023, including \$22 million for supplemental litter basket collection, bringing us to our highest service levels in history, \$7.5 million for precision cleaning to deploy targeted cleaning resources to clean litter and debris in the most challenging places, \$4.9 million for additional lot cleaning resources for vacant lots and City properties, and \$4.8 million for containerization and rodent-resistant litter baskets.

This is an unprecedented investment in cleaning up our City. I commit that I will maximize the value of this investment in every neighborhood in all five boroughs, and you will see – and smell – the impact of these investments in your districts almost instantly next month.

And now on to the hearing topic today.

In my two months as Commissioner, I've had the pleasure of learning about all the aspects of the Agency, including of course all our sustainability and zero waste programs. This Department is so much more than just waste collection and snow removal; we are at the forefront of the City's fight against climate change.

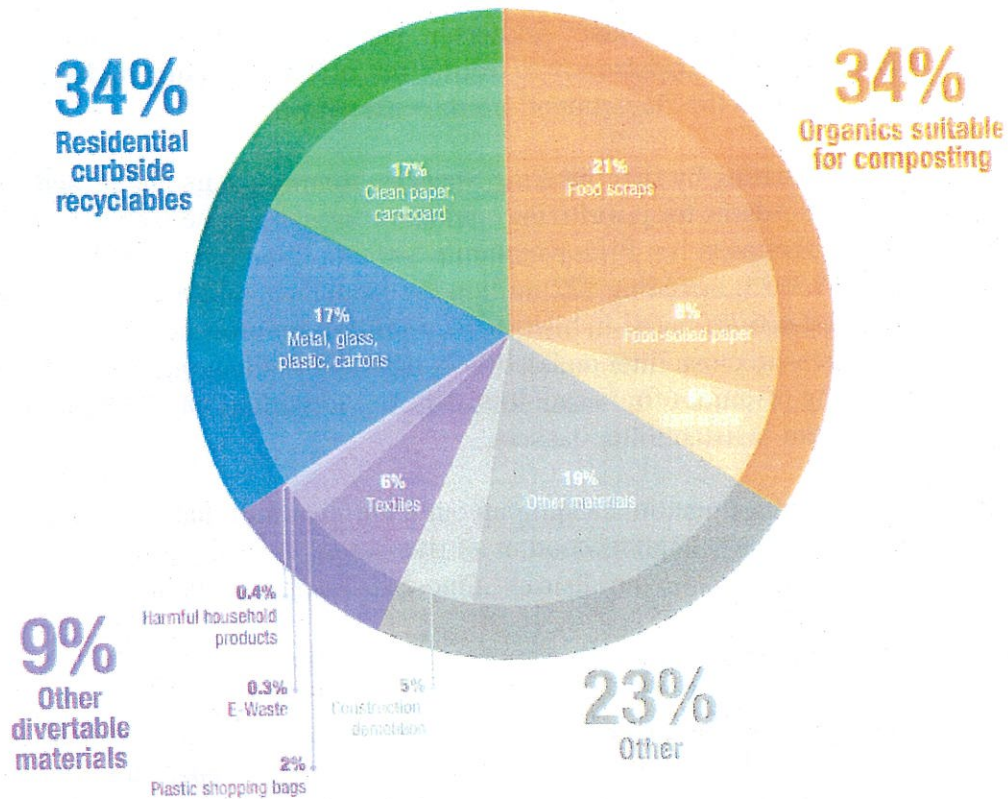
As we should be.

Waste management is responsible for emitting over 1.9 million tons of greenhouse gas emissions per year, equivalent to the emissions from nearly 500,000 passenger cars annually. When you count the global emissions from extraction, manufacture, transport and sale of the products we use in NYC, the impact increases several times over.

We are at a fork-in-the-road moment as an agency with great opportunities and equally large challenges when it comes to zero waste. Let me start with the good news—**we know what we must do to continue on our path towards zero waste.** We have programs for every major category of waste from New Yorkers. I’ve included in my testimony a chart from our last Waste Characterization Study that shows what makes up our waste stream. The Mayor’s Executive FY23 budget includes funding to conduct a new study that will help us make better decisions with the latest waste trends from New Yorkers, especially coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are excited to begin our new Waste Characterization Study this summer, with the full report expected to be finalized in 2024.

NYC Residential Waste Profile in 2017

2017 Composition of Residential Curbside Aggregate Discards



Zero Waste Programs

First, let me talk about our longstanding residential program for curbside recyclables that include metal, glass, plastics, paper, and cardboard. These materials represent about a third of the waste stream. This is our most successful diverting initiative. We recycle about 690,000 tons every year, with a capture rate of about 51% for paper and cardboard, and 50% for metal, glass, plastic and cartons.

Our curbside recycling program has been around for more than thirty years, and over time it has adapted to the changing nature of the waste stream. As a result of investments in local processing infrastructure and facilities, we have weathered the past few turbulent years in recycling markets, as other cities and towns across the country suspended or cut back on curbside recycling.

It's amazing that a newspaper that you throw in your green bin in Manhattan today will be barged to Staten Island to become a pizza box sold in Brooklyn next week. This is the beauty of recycling – products can live a new life, time after time. We are working to create a more self-sustaining city, and the underpinning of a successful program is that it is full circle. But a fifty percent capture rate is simply not good enough.

Next, are the many programs we run to capture organic waste, which is the most significant contributor of waste-related greenhouse gas emissions. This material also makes up 34 percent of the current waste stream – 46 million pounds a week. It represents a significant opportunity to reduce emissions from landfilled waste by diverting this material for composting and anaerobic digestion, and in the case specifically of food waste, by minimizing it at the source. We currently have a multi-pronged approach to divert this waste from landfill, including:

1. **Smart Bins:** Last fall, DSNY rolled out a pilot of 20 Smart Bins, unstaffed, controlled-access food scrap drop off sites, in Astoria. That pilot has been a great success, with bins filling up daily. We are excited to expand this program with more than 100 bins at school locations this fall, allowing students, their families, and members of the community to drop off their food scraps and taking advantage of existing school organics service. We also plan to add more bins to build out the Astoria network this fall.
2. **Food Scrap Drop-off sites:** This year, the Department doubled funding to support community compost partners and community-hosted food scrap drop-off sites from \$3.5 million to \$7 million annually. Today, our partners operate 223 food scrap drop-off sites citywide, including at least one in each community district. In April, the Adams Administration baselined this additional funding, ensuring these sites will continue to serve as valuable educational tools and diversion points for food waste.
3. **School Organics:** Our young New Yorkers are our future, and it's important that we encourage them to learn good habits and principles from the start. That's why we are working with the Department of Education to expand organics collection to every NYC public school over the next two years. It is important that we get this right, and

we are investing in intensive outreach and education as we roll out the program to the remaining schools. We are not reinventing the wheel – more than 600 schools already participate, some for nearly a decade. We will work with principals, custodians, food service workers, teachers, classroom aides, and students to ensure the right systems are in place and that they work.

4. Curbside Organics Program: This Administration took the wise step of pausing the ineffective, inequitable, and over-complicated “opt-in” curbside organics program at the beginning of the year. As I mentioned last month, this Administration is committed to making strides on organics, but we can’t throw good money after bad. I am in just my second month at the helm of this agency, and I am taking a deep dive into our past programs – what has worked and what hasn’t. With this foundation, I am working with OMB, City Hall, the City Council and our dedicated community partners to develop a curbside organics program that people actually use and that is both effective and cost-effective.

The last category of zero waste programs we run targets the 9% of materials in our waste stream that are suited for reuse or require some form of specialized disposal or care. These materials include harmful household waste such as paint and other chemicals, as well as electronics. The Department has several programs to help New Yorkers safely and sustainably divert these products, including drop-off sites, events, and curbside and apartment-building collection. But these programs are hard to understand and often inconvenient to access. I am committed to streamlining these services, so they are as easy to use as curbside trash and recycling collection.

Those are the programs that we have to divert waste, but DSNY’s approach to sending less waste to landfill is not just diversion—we also facilitate donations and events for New Yorkers to swap unwanted clothing, furniture and other products. Our DonateNYC portal helps individuals and organizations give goods and find goods. By donating and reusing goods instead of discarding them, New Yorkers can greatly reduce waste, conserve energy and resources, save money, and help provide jobs and human services for New Yorkers in need. DonateNYC also provides vital support for New York City’s reuse community, helping nonprofit organizations and local reuse businesses increase and promote their reuse efforts.

Now, I did mention some challenges that come with our zero waste programs. The first issue can be seen in the pie chart I mentioned earlier – notably the 23% of items that are not recyclable in any way. What that means is even if we captured every single item that could be diverted from landfill from the categories of our waste profile, we’d still only reach a diversion rate of 77%.

Addressing this 23% will take much more than just the Department of Sanitation. We’re talking about changing consumer behavior and forcing drastic production innovations or packaging restrictions on producers. For some products, disposal is unavoidable, and we must look to technology advancements to extract energy from waste rather than just send it to landfill.

We also must take steps to reduce waste at the source, including by making manufacturers, not municipalities, responsible for the products they manufacture and sell. Extended producer responsibility (EPR) programs are an important tool in our toolkit. So far, the State EPR program

for electronic waste has funded electronics collection programs across the state and diverted millions of pounds of valuable – and hazardous – materials. A program for paint rolled out last month, and a bill to create EPR for carpet awaits the Governor’s signature.

This session, we were strong advocates alongside the City Council for EPR bills for packaging and paper products, which would have unlocked a major new revenue stream to support recycling in NYC and forced manufacturers to rethink the way they make and sell products. I was disappointed that this bill did not pass this year, and I hope we can have productive conversations this summer and fall to position us for a better outcome next session.

Before I turn to the bills being heard today, I want to reiterate to you **that reducing the amount of waste we generate, collect, and dispose – and the air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions that come along with it – has been and will continue to be a core mission of this department.** Our wide range of diversion programs are all meant to reduce the amount of waste we send to landfill, saving the City money, conserving energy, and, of course, doing our part to meet the City’s ambitious climate goals.

Legislation

Intro 244 by Council Member Hanif requires the Department to create a mandatory citywide curbside organics program for residential buildings. The bill would further require DSNY to develop outreach and education materials to inform residents about the program and instruct residents on how to properly source separate organic waste.

A few things on this.

First, the Council is correct to be focusing on increasing our diversion rates for organic waste, as this represents the largest, most impactful opportunity we have to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Second, I believe that a curbside organics program must be an important component of an overall organics strategy.

Third, we have to recognize that, to date, less than 50% of New Yorkers have ever had access to a curbside organics collection program. I believe you have to give people voluntary access to curbside food waste collection and allow them to develop the muscle memory of separating out their food waste material before we contemplate mandatory programs. Food waste separation requires complex cultural change that cannot, in its first instance, be strictly punitive.

The next time we roll out a curbside organics program should be the last. We **must** get it right this time. That is an area of my intense focus.

I made it a priority during my first two months as Commissioner to do a review of the previous iteration of the organics program to learn from our mistakes and come up with potential solutions. I look forward to discussing our long-range proposals with the Council in the future.

Intro. 274 by Chair Nurse establishes a goal of zero waste for NYC by 2030. The bill further requires a report and recommendations if the Department determines that such citywide diversion goal is not feasible despite the best efforts of the City.

Though I support and applaud the spirit of the bill and the urgency of the issue at hand, we have concerns with the bill in front of us. The previous Administration set the goal of zero waste to landfill by 2030 in 2015, and very little progress has been made in the seven years since. The citywide diversion rate in 2015 was 17.8%; that number today is only 20.8%. So, halfway through the performance period, the diversion rate has only increased by 3%. We're simply not on a path toward zero waste by 2030 on our current trajectory. Nor do we have enough time left before 2030 for me to sit her today and genuinely tell you I think the goal is achievable.

I do think it's important to be transparent with the progress the Department is making when it comes to diversion rates, including the types of policies needed to get to zero waste. It's why I am supportive of the reporting requirements laid out in Intro 275, also by Chair Nurse. I'm a data driven person. Tracking this type of information will help the Council and the public understand the challenges we face and celebrate the progress made towards a more sustainable City. We look forward to working with the Council to advance this bill.

Intro. 280 & 281 by Council Member Powers would require the Department to establish and operate at least three community recycling centers and three food waste drop off sites in each community district, respectively.

SAFE events and food scrap drop-off sites are key parts of our work to reduce waste from landfill. We also agree with the Council that these events and sites must be accessible to New Yorkers and available throughout the city, no matter where a New Yorker lives. I agree with the spirit of these bills; however, I am concerned about the potential cost to implement Intro. 280. We are currently reviewing the cost and permitting requirements necessary to create a widespread network of permanent community recycling centers envisioned in that bill. On Intro. 281, we have already nearly met the requirements of the bill, and our growing network of Smart Bins should take us there later this year.

I look forward to working with the Council to create a suite of programs that are accessible, equitable, and effective – and ones that New Yorkers use.

Conclusion

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on these important pieces of legislation and allowing me time to give you an overview of our zero waste programs. I know we have a lot of common ground and share the same goals to have a clean, safe, healthy, and sustainable City. My hope is that we will work together on these bills and all future initiatives to get us there. I am now happy to answer any questions.



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Testimony of Council Member Shahana Hanif to the Committee on Sanitation & Waste Management- June 15, 2022

Good morning, I'm Council Member Shahana Hanif and I represent the 39th District in Brooklyn. Thank you to the Committee on Sanitation & Solid Waste Management and to my sister, Chair Sandy Nurse, for holding this critical hearing.

I'm so excited that my bill Intro. 244 is on today's agenda. This bill would create a citywide curbside composting program for residential buildings. I want to express tons of gratitude to the co-prime sponsors who introduced this bill alongside me: Speaker Adams, Chair Nurse, Brooklyn Borough President Reynoso, and Council Members Powers, Won, Bottcher, Gennaro, Menin, Hudson, Cabán, Brewer, and Rivera. I also want to thank so many other Council members for signing on as sponsors. We are currently up to 38 Council Member sponsors, which is a veto-proof supermajority. The overwhelming support and leadership behind this bill demonstrates that universal residential composting is a common sense solution that will solidify New York City as an environmental justice leader and save our city money.

Right now, more than a third of all trash New Yorkers produce is organic waste that could be composted. This waste goes to landfills and incinerators that are located primarily in lower-income communities of color. The impact on the health of these communities is undeniable. Take Newark for example, which houses Covanta Essex, one of the largest incinerators of New York City's trash. 1 in 4 children in Newark have asthma, more than three times higher than the national average.

Compost rotting in landfill is also a serious contributor to the city's greenhouse gas emissions. When organic material decomposes it releases methane, which is 25 times more destructive than Carbon Dioxide. Citywide composting addresses the urgency of global warming, the root cause of extreme weather events harming our neighbors. We can minimize harm here by diverting our organic waste to regenerative and environmentally conscious composting facilities that would nourish our City's soil and provide farmers with rich fertilizer.

This is also a critical economic issue. The Independent Budget Office, the public agency that conducts thorough and objective economic analysis for the City, has identified mandatory curbside composting as a mechanism for savings. While there will naturally be start-up costs associated with such a transformative program, by Year 5, these costs would be canceled out

by savings. After Year 5, the City would save approximately \$33 Million dollars annually. These savings are created by a number of factors including streamlining composting truck collection, reducing the amount of necessary trash truck runs, and securing lower rates for organics processing due to economies of scale. Cities that have already implemented residential composting, such as Seattle and San Francisco, are seeing these benefits. This program would also create thousands of good-paying green jobs, which is why we've seen inspiring support from our siblings in the labor movement.

I've seen the benefits of curbside composting through the opt-in program available in Community Boards 6 and 7, which overlap with my district. However, our experience with the current program illustrates why a mandatory, rather than voluntary system is necessary. Requiring residents to opt-in creates an inherent barrier to the program, which keeps rates of participation low. Participation is also reduced by building managers and landlords refusing to implement changes needed for their tenants to participate. Low participation results in less compost being produced, less efficient truck runs, and higher rates for organic processing. This is not economically sustainable and fails to reach the environmental impact that the current crisis moment demands.

While a mandatory system would be bringing many New Yorkers into composting for the first time, I am confident that through a comprehensive education campaign that is both culturally competent and language accessible, we can hit the participation levels needed for success.

I'll close by saying that I am also thrilled to sponsor The CORE Act- Intro. 280 and 281 from Majority Leader Powers and the Zero Waste bills- Intros 274 and 275 from Sanitation Chair Nurse. Together, this legislative package is a major step towards a truly green New York City. Thank you and I look forward to hearing from my colleagues, the administration, and the public.



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER
BRAD LANDER

Testimony of
Jamie Statter, Director of Climate Infrastructure, Office of the New York City Comptroller
Before the New York City Council Committees on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management
Hybrid Hearing

June 15, 2022

Thank you, Chair Nurse, and to the Committee members for convening this hearing, considering this legislation, and providing me with the opportunity to testify today. My name is Jamie Statter, and I am the Director of Climate Infrastructure in the New York City Comptroller's Office.

Comptroller Lander has long been a leading advocate for scaling up our City's zero waste efforts with robust, strategic, and sustainable approaches to sanitation. As the lead sponsor of the plastic bag fee/ban and Styrofoam ban bills, a champion of implementing and expanding the City's composting program, and an early sponsor of the Council's waste equity and commercial waste zone legislation, the Comptroller understands the critical importance of these hard-fought wins and will continue to champion policies that set our City on a path towards sending zero waste to landfills by 2030. To that end, I want to thank the Council for introducing and hearing the critical pieces of legislation being heard here today – Comptroller Lander fully supports the full package of sanitation bills on the table for today: Intros 0274-2022 and 0275-2022 introduced by Council Member Nurse, Intro 0244-2022 sponsored by Council Member Hanif, and Intro 0280-2022 and 0281-2022 sponsored by Council Member Powers.

As the most populous city in the country, New York City's efforts to build a more livable, sustainable, resilient, and just city are dependent on our ability to management waste and sanitation. Good government requires that we get the basics right, and nothing is more basic to urban life than waste management.

This spring, Comptroller Lander hosted town halls attended by more than 460 people across the city and conducted a survey to hear what New Yorkers have to say on sanitation. We heard clearly that New Yorkers overwhelmingly want cleaner streets and organics composting. Nearly 60 percent of 3,000 survey respondents said that the cleanliness of their neighborhoods has gotten worse, citing overflowing street litter baskets and trash on sidewalks as top issues.

New Yorkers want—and deserve—better sanitation services in their neighborhoods. That is why that thanks to leadership from Waste and Sanitation Committee chair Sandy Nurse, the Council won restorations to the Sanitation Department's budget. But we cannot stop there.

Our City must continue to advance solutions that not only keep our neighborhoods clean, but make –real progress on our City's commitments to mitigating climate change and improving equity. The bills you are considering today are critically needed steps towards a livable future for New Yorkers in two ways: first, by establishing accountability to the City's zero waste commitments, and second, by providing more equitable and uniform access to composting and recycling.

The City's stated waste commitments include sending zero waste to landfills by 2030 and reducing greenhouse gases via community and curbside compost collection.

As the Chief Accountability Officer of New York City, Comptroller Lander enthusiastically supports Intro 0274-2022 and Intro 0275-2022 sponsored by Council Member Nurse to ensure accountability in implementation of commitments. New Yorkers should hear regularly from the administration on its progress and efforts to achieve zero waste by 2030 and these bills establish a framework to hold the City accountable to those commitments.

Further, meeting the City's zero waste commitment requires that the City expand – not contract – the collection of organic waste and recycling in our city. Two-thirds of survey respondents want organic waste collected and composted by the City. Organic waste is the most significant contributor of waste-related greenhouse gas emissions, representing over one-third of the city's municipal waste. The overwhelming bulk of our organic materials are now sent to landfills or incinerators, typically located in overly burdened neighborhoods and communities of color. In landfills, organics generate methane – a

very potent greenhouse gas. And when food waste or yard waste are sent to incinerators, they create additional air pollution impacting the health of surrounding communities. Instead, composting food scraps and yard waste can reduce pollution to our communities while producing agriculturally useful products and reducing methane emissions.

For these reasons, Comptroller Lander supports Intro 0244-2022 sponsored by Council Member Hanif to implement a citywide curbside organics program for residential buildings alongside Intro 0280-2022 and Intro 0281-2022 sponsored by Council Member Powers to expand the number of drop off locations for organic waste and recycling.

In 2018, New York City had the largest composting program in the nation, serving the five boroughs and 3.5 million people. These services were cut at the onset of the pandemic, but the climate crisis requires that we move forward not backward. Let us go back to leading in this important area. The people resoundingly want better sanitation services and want composting to be a part of that mix.

Our office is proud to support the slate of bills you are considering today and aid in your efforts to effectively provide critical services to New Yorkers and mitigate the impacts of climate change. Thank you again for convening this important hearing and for the opportunity to work together to address climate change in an equitable and just fashion.



OFFICE OF THE BROOKLYN BOROUGH PRESIDENT

ANTONIO REYNOSO

Brooklyn Borough President

**Testimony to New York City Council
Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management
June 15, 2022**

Thank you Chair Nurse and Sanitation Committee members for the opportunity to speak today. I'm Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso. As the former Chair of this Committee, I want to thank you for holding this hearing today about this very important package of legislation that will help bring our city closer to its stated goal of sending zero waste to landfills by 2030.

I say "stated goal" because, though Mayor Adams has said on record that he wants to achieve it, the truth is that since Mayor de Blasio announced the zero waste by 2030 target, we've barely made any progress toward it. Our citywide diversion rate is stuck somewhere between 16-18%, meaning we are still paying for the vast majority of the waste we generate to be trucked to out-of-state landfills, which costs money, contributes to climate change, and exacerbates health issues in environmental justice communities. Making the progress we need is going to require quick implementation of smart policies like the ones being considered today.

Intros 244 and 281

Because approximately 30% of waste that New Yorkers send to landfill is organic waste, changing the way we handle the food we throw away will help us make the largest gains toward this goal. The new school organics program and associated smart bins will help, but the scale isn't enough to really tackle the issue. Intro 244, requiring a citywide curbside organics collection program, is the best way to get this done efficiently.

In more than one previous hearing, this administration has responded to questions about expanding organics collection by saying they don't want to "throw good money after bad." However, studies show that investing in a robust organics collection program would do exactly the opposite. Last year the Independent Budget Office found that increasing participation in the curbside program would reduce per-ton collection costs significantly – as they put it, "the more curbside tonnage, the cheaper per ton it becomes to pick up any of the waste streams DSNY collects." Even if this required extra trucks, the study found, the associated increase in emissions would be more than offset by diverting the organics from landfill.

Unfortunately, we lost our opportunity to plan for this in the FY 23 budget. But now we have a full year to get this legislation done and plan accordingly. In the meantime, we do need to shore up our community-based drop-off sites, as proposed in Intro 281, which are the only option for so many New Yorkers who don't currently have access to the curbside program. However, I want to be clear that adding more drop-off sites is not going far enough to fixing this problem. Universal curbside collection is the true solution. In the long term, we'll not only be helping the planet, we'll save taxpayer money, too.

Intro 280

Intro 280, which would establish community recycling centers in every community district, was conceived of during the height of the pandemic when cuts to DSNY recycling programs were at their worst, yet it remains relevant today. Proper disposal of e-waste and hazardous materials is important, yet compliance can be tough. The City's by-appointment e-waste pickup program is limited in scope, and larger buildings must opt-in. The hazardous materials program requires residents to transport their materials to a drop-off site. With only one drop-off site per borough, too much of this type of waste currently ends up in landfill. Creating community-based drop-off centers is a smart solution. Residents can also have the option to bring their organics, textiles, and larger items that cannot be collected at the curb.

Intros 274 and 275

I also want to lend my support to Intros 274 and 275, which codify the goal of sending zero waste to landfill by 2030 and require the City to report on their progress toward it. This mandate could spur new investment and innovation from DSNY; for example, the EPA reports that communities that have implemented an incentive-based Save-as-you-Throw model have seen significant increases in recycling and reductions in waste. DSNY has studied this model but has not yet taken steps toward implementation. This, along with other transformative programs such as commercial waste collection zones (which I am very much looking forward to seeing begin this summer) and policies to limit single-use plastics, could help us make huge strides toward our zero waste goals.

Thank you for your time today. Let's keep working together to make our streets cleaner and our waste management systems more sustainable.



MEMORANDUM IN OPPOSITION

Int. 244

The Rent Stabilization Association of New York City represents 25,000 diverse owners and managers who collectively manage more than one million apartments in every neighborhood and community throughout the city. We thank the Committee for giving us the opportunity to provide comments in opposition to Int. 244, which would require the creation of a citywide organic waste curbside collection program.

The creation of a citywide curbside collection program for residential buildings would mean residential buildings would be the depository of this organic waste for extended periods between scheduled Sanitation collections. Residential buildings would be required to establish organic waste collection bins onsite. Most buildings will be forced to keep these organic collection bins inside individual apartments or in basements given the limited storage options and lack of outdoor access. Rats and other vermin are sure to follow.

As New York City continues to grapple with an unprecedented rat infestation, with rat complaints at record highs - over 7,000 rat complaints in the first four months of this year - according to city data, to require buildings to store food waste for additional periods of time will only serve to bring the rat problem from the streets to inside residential buildings. Rats will travel to where there is food, so as to require organic waste to be left uncollected for longer periods of time will only exacerbate the current rat crisis. With the rat explosion out of control, now is not a time to require buildings to keep food waste on site.

For the above reasons RSA is opposed to Intro. 244 and urges the council to table this proposal.



**STATEMENT OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL
BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT
REGARDING INTRO 244 -- UNIVERSAL CURBSIDE COMPOST COLLECTION
AND OTHER BILLS TO ADVANCE MORE SUSTAINABLE WASTE POLICIES**

June 15, 2022

Good afternoon Chair Nurse and members of the Committee. My name is Eric A. Goldstein and I am New York City Environment Director at the Natural Resources Defense Council (“NRDC”). As you know, NRDC is a national, non-profit legal and scientific organization active on a wide range of environmental health, natural resource protection and quality-of-life issues internationally, across the country and right here in New York City, where we have had our main offices since NRDC’s founding in 1970. Over the decades, NRDC staff have had as one of our top regional priorities the goal of transforming New York’s waste system from primary reliance on landfilling and incineration to one that has waste prevention, composting, recycling and equity as its cornerstones.

We have been waiting a decade for this day to arrive! It was back in 2013 that then-Mayor Bloomberg, in his final State of the City address, called composting “recycling’s final frontier,” noted that composting could save taxpayer dollars (vs landfilling) and pledged to advance stepped-up food waste collections citywide. And it was that same year that the City Council enacted Local Law 77, which directed the Sanitation Department to create the first voluntary residential compost collection pilot project, as well as a school organic waste pilot project in at least 400 schools.

We believe today’s hearing marks the beginning of what we expect will be an historic turning point in New York City solid waste policy. How exciting! In advance, we extend our genuine thanks to you, Chair Nurse, and to Councilmember Hanif, Majority Leader Powers, all of the bills’ co-sponsors and, of course, Speaker Adrienne Adams for your collective leadership on these waste reform issues that affect the lives of all New Yorkers.

NRDC supports all five of the bills that are the subject of today’s hearing. But in this testimony, I will focus on Intro 244, which would establish, at long last, separated curbside collection of food scraps and yard waste for every household in New York City.

Intro 244 – Advancing The Solution to the City’s Food Waste Disposal Problem

Simply stated, NRDC believes that this bill is the most important piece of environmental legislation introduced this year in the City Council. Councilmember Hanif’s introductory statement was beautiful and made the case in compelling fashion. But to quickly recap: food

scraps, yard waste and food soiled paper are the single largest portion of the city's residential waste load. Together, they make up more than one third of the total waste New Yorkers discard -- roughly 4,000 tons per day. The overwhelming majority of these materials are currently sent to landfills or incinerators. But when buried at landfills, these organic materials break down and release methane, a very potent, climate-altering gas. (Landfills are the third largest source of methane emissions in the nation, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.) And at incinerators, food scraps and yard waste -- because of their high moisture content -- upset the burning process, boosting localized emissions of air contaminants.

Making matters worse, these landfills and incinerators are too often located in Black and brown neighborhoods outside of New York City and place disproportionate environmental burdens on those communities. (For example, about 1,000 tons a day of Manhattan's waste, including organics, have for years been sent to the troubled Covanta incinerator in Newark, New Jersey.) As if that weren't enough, there's another problem associated with the current system of combining food waste with other trash that New Yorkers place at curbside for Sanitation Department collection: the black plastic bags containing these putrescible mixed wastes provide ideal dining opportunities for the city's increasingly brazen rat population.

The Advantages of Food Waste Composting

In contrast, composting organic waste offers numerous advantages. It is a natural process that advances the decomposition of food scraps, yard waste and food-soiled paper and results in finished compost, which is rich in nutrients and resembles fertile garden soil. Finished compost is used as a soil supplement that reduces the need for chemical fertilizers, prevents erosion, helps retain moisture in soil and aids in the growth of crops, street trees and houseplants. And composting operations create twice as many jobs as do landfill facilities (and four times more than incinerators), per ton of trash disposed of.

Finally, the cost of exporting the city's trash to out-of-city landfills and incinerators continues to climb -- from \$430 million in FY'20 to \$470 million in FY'22. Meanwhile, the City's Independent Budget Office reported in October 2021 that, as participation in organics collection increases over time, a universal curbside organics collection program could actually save taxpayers money over current disposal methods. And in Seattle, according to an April 14, 2020 analysis in BioCycle Magazine, the curbside compost collection program is saving taxpayers as much as \$18 dollars per ton, for each ton of organics being composted and kept out of landfills or incinerators.

Intro 244's Special Feature – It's Universal Application

The heart and soul of Intro 244 is the directive that the Sanitation Department "shall establish a mandatory citywide residential organic waste curbside collection program for the diversion of organic waste..." Section 16-308.1(b),(c). This mandatory, universal directive is the bill's essential element.

The voluntary approach has been tried. It hasn't worked. To be sure, NYC's voluntary curbside composting collection pilot projects provided valuable feedback and opportunities to compost for residents who made the extra effort to participate. But, in the end, they were not successful. They never received wholehearted City Hall support or the institutional resources needed. Their operations weren't cost-effective. Necessary changes to enhance performance weren't made. And they did not secure widespread public participation in the districts where they've been operating.

Meanwhile, the city's other ongoing food waste collection effort -- community composting at local drop-off sites -- has become a more successful, inspiration model. But while community composting can and should continue to be a key part of the city's sustainable food waste arsenal, it cannot ensure full citywide participation or maximize the benefits of the composting strategy.

The experience in cities like San Francisco and Seattle clearly demonstrate one fact: separated universal curbside organics collections that serve every city resident is the approach needed to achieve the broad-based environmental and economic advantages of food waste composting.

We can't leave the timing of universal, citywide curbside composting to City Hall. That approach didn't work in the Bloomberg administration. It didn't work in the DeBlasio administration. And it's unlikely to work in the Adams administration, despite the best intentions of Commissioner Jessica Tisch and her dedicated Sanitation Department staff.

This is the reason that forward-looking legislative bodies adopt mandates. Congress didn't let the auto companies decide when to install air pollution controls on motor vehicles or let those companies choose how much to enhance their miles-per-gallon performance. Lawmakers set realistic dates and milestones to achieve those advances.

To be clear, we aren't asking the Council to create unrealistic deadlines or direct Draconian enforcement. Sensible implementation of mandatory composting must begin with comprehensive, multi-pronged public education efforts and voluntary phase-in periods. But having the Council adopt a mandatory, universal requirement for curbside organics collection is essential to ensure broad participation and achieve the Council's important environmental and economic objectives.

Three Friendly Proposed Amendments to Intro 244

As the Council moves to finalize the language of Intro 244's universal compost collection mandate, we offer three friendly amendments to the proposed legislation.

■ Add a Requirement for a Lessons-Learned Study of the City's Composting Pilot Project

First, we recommend that the final bill include a provision directing the Sanitation Department to produce a study of what went right and what went wrong with the city's previous curbside composting demonstration projects and what lessons NYC can learn from successful mandatory curbside composting programs in other jurisdictions. We understand that the

Department has already begun an internal analysis along these lines. Among the issues that should be examined in this study are:

--an evaluation of the public education efforts undertaken by the city to support the composting pilot projects;

--an assessment of how the frequency of curbside composting collections affected participation;

--a review of the design of the brown organics collection bins and whether design modifications are needed;

-- a description of measures that other cities have implemented to maximize public participation and cost-effectiveness of their curbside organics collection programs;

--a survey of residents in Community Districts that participated in the curbside collection pilot, to obtain their views on what worked in the program and how could be improved; and

--an analysis of available and planned capacity in New York City and the surrounding region to compost or otherwise sustainably handle the expected increase in collected organics once curbside organics collections are implemented in every Community District.

■ Direct the Preparation of a Comprehensive Curbside Collection Implementation Plan

Second, we recommend that the final bill incorporate a provision providing that the Sanitation Department prepare a comprehensive plan for how its universal organics collection program will be designed and implemented. The plan should be based upon lessons learned from the Department's study, noted above. Among the elements that should be included in such plan are:

--a schedule that provides for the phase in of at least weekly curbside collection of organics at every city residence;

--a description of the residential containers and vehicle fleet that will be used to collect the organics in the most cost-effective manner;

--proposed adjustments that may be needed or advisable for Sanitation Department collection schedules, work rules, etc.;

--a description of how the Department will work with affected unions to ensure smooth implementation of needed changes;

--a directive that every school building be required to separate their organics for collection;

--a strategy to ensure convenient curbside composting opportunities for residents at every New York City Housing Authority building;

--a discussion of how community organics collections and local compost processing operations successfully being run by city non-profits, GrowNYC and the botanical gardens can be integrated into the city's universal composting plan and other NYC sustainability programs; and

--an identification of strategies that have proven successful in residential curbside compost collection programs in other jurisdictions and an assessment of how those strategies might be adopted to enhance New York City's curbside collection program.

The legislation should also include an opportunity for public comment on this comprehensive plan before it is finalized by the Department.

■ Incorporate an Unambiguous Timetable for D.S.N.Y. Implementation

Third, we recommend that the final bill include a non-discretionary timetable for completion of the study and the plan, described above, as well as for full-scale implementation of curbside composting collections for every city household. To its credit, Intro 244, in its current form, does include a date by which the Department "shall establish a mandatory citywide residential curbside organic waste collection program..." We suggest, however, that the City Council be specific in identifying intermediate milestone deadlines that must be met to achieve full-scale implementation.

The legislation should set dates certain for:

-- completion of the above referenced study;

--release of the Department's above-referenced comprehensive curbside organics collection implementation plan;

--initiation of a broad-based, multi-lingual curbside compost public education program;

--a phase-in of mandatory curbside collections in each Community District (so that the Department has an opportunity to address any unanticipated start-up challenges that may arise); and

--the date by which every city household in every city neighborhood will be served by curbside organics collections.

For example, one possible timetable would require the Department's pilot project study to be completed by December 2022; for its implementation plan to be released by June 2023, for public education activities to begin in July 2023, for phase-in of separated organics collections to begin in some districts (such as the seven districts that are already served by the voluntary program) by January 2024 and for full, citywide organics collections to be in place by July 2025.

History suggests that to ensure successful and timely implementation it is essential that the Council provide unambiguous intermediate benchmarks for major program elements. And that is what this third recommendation is designed to accomplish.

Intros 274 and 275 -- Moving New York City Closer to Zero Waste

There are four other bills that are the subject of today's hearing. Intro 274 would establish as an official goal for the Sanitation Department to divert 100 percent of Department-collected waste from landfills (and presumably incinerators, as well) into more sustainable disposal alternatives, including reuse, recycling, composting and waste prevention by 2030. And Intro 275 would require the Department to submit a Zero Waste plan for accomplishing that goal by July 2023. Long-term goals like this are aspirational and play a vital role in prodding government agencies to think creatively and redeploy resources to meet new challenges. Setting such ambitious goals and designing plans to reach them are logical steps that should be supported by all who want to achieve a more sustainable planet, a climate less disrupted by global warming emissions and a more livable city for all residents. While we might suggest a more gradual, stepped timetable for achieving the bill's Zero Waste goal, NRDC wholeheartedly endorses the thrust and direction of these two proposals and applauds Chair Sandy Nurse for her leadership.

Intros 280 and 281 -- Providing Community-Based Recycling and Composting Drop-Offs for All

Finally, Intro 280 would direct the Sanitation Commissioner to establish at least three community drop-off recycling centers in each Community District by June 1, 2023, with such facilities open at least 20 hours a week to accept recyclables not collected via the city's curbside recycling program (i.e., textiles and electronic waste), as well as household hazardous waste. In addition, Intro 281 would direct the Commissioner to set up at least three community composting drop-off centers in each Community District by January 1, 2023, open at least 20 hours a week for collections of food scraps and yard waste. For many years, NRDC and community leaders across the city have called for additional, convenient opportunities for residents to drop-off recyclables, household hazardous waste and compostables. Indeed, those community composting sites already in existence have played a critical role in supporting neighborhood food scrap collections and building support and participation for more widespread composting programs. NRDC stands behind the objectives of these two bills and appreciates the long-running leadership of Councilmember Keith Powers in fighting to ensure that all city neighborhoods receive more convenient sanitation services.

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Thank you for your attention. We look forward to working with you and your staffs as your move forward to advance Intro 244 and these other important legislative initiatives.

New York City Council Hearing: Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management on Wednesday, June 15, 2022

Demi A. Moore

Introduction

Good afternoon, Chair Nurse and members of the Committee. My name is Demi A. Moore and I am here on behalf of the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), where I am spending my summer researching different ways to combat the climate crisis through the lens of environmental law. I have spent the past few weeks studying universal composting legislation in three major American cities: San Francisco, California, Seattle, Washington, and Portland, Oregon.

There are many lessons these cities have learned along the way. In working to mitigate the environmentally hazardous effects of landfill disposal, these cities have come to understand organics collection as a collective effort as opposed to a personal project. Their experiences can help give teeth to zero-waste initiatives that otherwise place the burden of diverting refuse away from landfills on individual consumers rather than on communities that share in the responsibility of protecting the environment.

All three cities started out like New York. They were all where we currently are, struggling to manage voluntary composting programs that proved to be unsustainable due to a general lack of incentives, low participation rates, and insufficient logistical support. Within years, however, they have managed to change course through mandates that register composting as a core priority and an integral part of city living.

San Francisco, California

San Francisco became the first city in the nation to adopt universal composting legislation in 2009, which was achieved eight years after it made voluntary curbside organics collection available to all properties in 2001. The directive applied citywide within a year of the 2009 Mandatory Composting and Recycling Ordinance's passage into law. It requires everyone who visits, lives in, and does business in the city to separate out compostables, recyclables, and trash.

The ordinance amends the San Francisco Environment Code, the San Francisco Public Works Code, and the San Francisco Health Code. It outlines rules for tourists, residences, businesses, and institutions to follow when disposing of waste within the bounds of the city. Additionally, it offers guidance to administrators who work to ensure compliance through department inspections and administrative fines for service violations.

The San Francisco Department of Public Works partners with private waste management company Recology to divert nearly 650 tons of organics and 625 tons of recyclables out of the 2,300 tons of solid waste that the city generates on a daily basis away from landfills. At Jepson Prairie Organics, which is located just north of San Francisco, compostables are transformed into a nutrient-rich soil amendment that is used to grow crops that often return to the city as produce.

Many cities like San Francisco take a "save-as-you-throw" approach to solid waste management. Other cities without this structure in place can still motivate their residents and businesses to

compost through a similar network of economic incentives. For example, customers in San Francisco can maximize savings by customizing service frequency and container sizes according to their needs. All customers are eligible for discounts on their monthly collection bill depending on the volume of waste they divert by properly sorting organics and recyclables.

City officials credit the success of the mandate to the 2001 voluntary composting program and the 2003 Food Service and Packaging Waste Reduction Ordinance.

Seattle, Washington

Seattle began its voluntary food waste collection program in 2005. Following in San Francisco's footsteps, it became the second city in the nation to mandate universal composting when it began requiring that all residential properties participate in food waste collection or backyard composting in 2009. In 2014, Seattle initiated a complete ban on food waste in the garbage.

The city has found a number of innovative ways to design public education initiatives. When garbage carts are found to contain more than 10% of food waste that is otherwise meant for composting carts, Seattle Public Utilities will tag noncompliant carts with red flags to both educate customers about composting dos and don'ts and put those who have been delinquent in their civic duty on notice. Seattle began issuing fines for violations only after it had previewed the warnings (in the form of penalty flags) during a six-month grace period.

Seattle's awareness campaigns have been made available in fourteen different languages to inform customers about what the program entails, including weekly garbage and compost pickups and bi-weekly pickups for recycling. In the program's first year alone, organics collection rose by 30%.

Portland, Oregon

Metro, a regional government based in Portland, Oregon, adopted a 2018 ordinance that requires certain businesses that generate food waste to dispose of said waste in composting carts, dumpsters, and compactors. While Portland does not currently have a mandatory composting program in place for residents, it is hard at work to ensure that most food-service businesses will fall within the ambit of the law over the next three to four years—that is, as long as these establishments discard of 250 or more pounds of food scraps per week. Affected businesses are slated to receive notice from the city at least one year before their respective enforcement deadlines to prepare for what is to come. Technical assistance will also help businesses adjust to the transition over time.

The city's plans to tackle food insecurity and solid waste management come together in the form of its support for food rescue initiatives. Metro has worked to contribute grant money and tools to expand access to food that would otherwise go to waste in the greater Portland region. One food-service business owner noted that participating in the composting program prompted her to reconsider how to tackle food waste at its source: the restaurant she owns has cut back on the amount of food it serves to customers, which means that it disposes of less food waste overall.

Metro anticipates that the requirement will more than double the amount of food scraps diverted from landfills in any given year and has planned for a total ban on landfill disposal of commercial food waste to go into effect in 2025.

Conclusion

When composting programs are optional, collection rates often stall at a level far below the volume of organics that could be diverted to composting facilities. Studies from these three cities show that collection rates tend to dramatically increase when these programs are mandatory, however.

Curbside organics collection programs are only financially sustainable when they are designed to achieve economies of scale. If regional governments adjust collection schedules and pick-up routes in ways that properly account for the increase in food and yard waste and the decrease in garbage, cities like New York can begin to take advantage of the lower cost of collecting and hauling compostables to composting sites where tipping fees are generally lower than they are at landfills. While garbage wastes away in mounds at landfills, compostables return to the market as finished product and renewable energy.

Universal composting programs in San Francisco, Seattle, and Portland put into evidence that we need not compromise the health and safety of the environment and our communities for short-term savings. An alternative way forward will require a plan that is comprehensive in its offerings, administratively feasible, agile in its approach to the climate crisis and food insecurity, and accessible to New York City's diverse population. San Francisco, Seattle, and Portland are a testament to the fact that there is no time to waste, especially when there is so much to be gained.

I urge a vote in favor of Intro 244, which would mandate curbside organics collection in New York City. Thank you for your time.



**Testimony of Carlos Castell Croke
Associate for NYC Programs
New York League of Conservation Voters**

**City Council Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management
Hearing on Intros 244, 274, 275, 280 and 281
June 15th, 2022**

Good afternoon, my name is Carlos Castell Croke and I am the Associate for New York City Programs at the New York League of Conservation Voters (NYLCV). NYLCV represents over 30,000 members in New York City and we are committed to advancing a sustainability agenda that will make our people, our neighborhoods, and our economy healthier and more resilient. I would like to thank Chair Nurse for the opportunity to testify.

I am here today because waste diversion and progressive recycling programs are integral to fighting climate change. Establishing a comprehensive composting collection system for NYC will help us reduce the waste we send to landfills by a third, reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transporting waste and from decomposition in landfills, and fight pests like rats and roaches that thrive on our food waste. Furthermore, diverting as much waste as possible from landfills through recycling programs and waste reduction policies will further our State and Citywide climate goals.

We are so excited that these bills are finally at a committee hearing. Many people in this room have been working on some of these bills for years. NYLCV fully supports the intentions of these bills. Intros 274 and 275, which will codify the goal of 0x30 and require DSNY to report on our progress can help push us further towards higher rates of diversion and emission reductions. Intro 244, will expand the long stalled curbside composting pilot as originally intended. Finally, the CORE Act bills will further improve our diversion rates by establishing community compost and recycling systems, which was a high priority for NYLCV last year and was on our 2021 Scorecard.

I want to wholeheartedly thank Council Members Hanif and Powers for their visionary work to introduce these bills, and even more so commend Chair Nurse for bringing these bills to a hearing and ensuring that we are actually making progress on waste reduction and our current climate emergency.

While the prospect of implementing these pieces of legislation is enticing and long overdue, I would like to bring attention to the feasibility of the aggressive timelines put forward in some of them. As mentioned previously, the goal of zero waste to landfills by 2030 was first brought forth in 2015 in OneNYC, seven years ago. Since then, we have only made minor progress towards the possible 90% diversion, increasing from 15% to 18 by 2020. Reaching the 90% milestone in just eight more years would be a phenomenal feat, and potentially unachievable. Successful implementation would require bans on currently allowed single-use items, extended producer responsibility programs in a number of sectors that likely require State legislation, a large increase in regional organic waste recycling capacity, much higher compliance with existing recycling programs, and new or expanded recycling programs for items like textiles. Additionally, the curbside composting pilot, which would essentially be expanded to all R2 and R3 houses through Intro 244, has lost funding and ground over the past years due to budget cuts. We already know through the experience of trying to restore the curbside organic waste program and the difficulty the City had in restoring metal, glass and plastic recycling rates after that program was suspended in 2002 that it is incredibly difficult to educate and reeducate residents about how to participate in these programs, and a full education campaign will take time and resources to implement. Participation is key to a successful composting program, and a longer timeframe may be necessary to ensure a productive program.

After years of inaction, this hearing is finally moving us towards our zero waste and climate goals. NYLCV strongly supports the goals of these bills, but we believe it is important to work with DSNY to determine feasible timelines.

Thank you.

**Testimony of Eleanor Tahbaz,
New York Lawyers for the Public Interest
New York City
Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management
June 15, 2022**

Thank you, Chair Nurse, and members of the Sanitation and Solid Waste Management Committee for the opportunity to speak at today's committee hearing. My name is Eleanor Tahbaz and I am a Policy Intern at New York Lawyers for the Public Interest (NYLPI).

We are grateful to each of you and to Speaker Adams for advancing major legislation that, if passed into law, would make major strides toward a more sustainable waste system in New York City.

As our world faces an escalating climate crisis, New York City continues to send almost 80% of our municipal waste stream to landfills and incinerators. Most of this waste could be recycled and reused, as well as to help reduce our energy usage. Solid waste is now estimated to contribute at least 12% of New York State's greenhouse gas emissions, and the harmful impacts of our inadequate waste system are felt daily throughout the city as rat populations surge, piles of garbage bags block our sidewalks and streets, and environmental justice communities continue to experience disproportionate harm from waste transfer stations, truck yards, and dangerous garbage trucks.

In recent years, multiple rounds of budget cuts, freezes, and delays to diversion programs in both the residential and commercial sectors have undermined participation in recycling programs, taking us backward from our goal of zero waste by 2030 and perpetuating existing inequities.

Therefore, we enthusiastically support the bills being considered today and offer a few suggested amendments:

Intro 274 would establish a goal of diverting 100% of New York City's citywide generated waste by 2030 and require The City of New York Department of

Sanitation (DSNY) to report on and develop plans to address any waste that cannot be diverted. We encourage the Council to amend this bill to define “citywide generated waste” to explicitly include all municipal waste, commercial trade waste, and construction and demolition waste generated within the city.

Intro 275 would require DSNY to report annually on the City’s progress toward a goal of sending “zero waste to landfills” by 2030 and to develop plans to increase diversion in various waste streams, including waste generated in NYCHA properties. We urge the Council to expand this to include diversion from incinerators as well as landfills, as incineration of solid waste is a major source of greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution in environmental justice communities near New York City and statewide.

We recommend that both Intro 274 and 275 be amended to include planning for diversion of commercial waste in each of the commercial waste zones established by Local Law 199, and a specific plan to increase diversion of construction and demolition waste citywide.

Intro 244 would mandate a universal composting program by 2023, through which all New Yorkers can recycle their food and yard waste, and in which building owners and managers are required to participate – just as they are with other recyclable materials. This investment in recycling organic waste is critical to meeting our city’s zero waste and climate goals and has the potential to support far more, good green jobs in our city and region than our current export- and disposal-centered waste management system. We also recommend that specific attention be paid to large multi-family apartment buildings and NYCHA housing specifically to maintain equality and equity with this program roll out.

We support the rapid, citywide scale-up of organic recycling envisioned in this bill. The low participation rates and excessive costs of the current opt-in organics program underscores that any successful program must be mandatory and universal to realize high participation rates, consistent public messaging and education across communities and building types, and economies of scale. As the Independent Budget Office [recently reported](#), a rapid, citywide organics program could also yield cost savings of \$33 million within five years.

If NYCHA properties cannot be included in this mandate, we urge the Department of Sanitation and Council to ensure NYCHA properties likewise implement a robust organic waste recycling programs in parallel with the timeline for other large residential buildings established by Intro 244.

We also note that the timeline for a citywide residential compost program mandated by Intro 244 is well-synchronized with the expected expansion of organics recycling programs in commercial businesses as enforcement of the City's commercial organics rules is set to begin this July, and implementation of Local Law 199 proceeds later this year. This bill has beneficial source-separation rules and practices for workplaces, commercial businesses, schools, and residences which allows the programs to be as uniform as possible so that public and customer education campaigns are consistent, widely distributed, and mutually reinforcing.

Finally, NYLPI continues to support passage of Intros 280 and 281, known as the CORE Act, which would lock in and build upon the success of community drop-off sites for organic waste and recyclables and ensure equitable distribution and access to these sites in every borough and community district. Much of the organic material collected at food scrap drop-off sites is processed locally by community-facing organizations, which reduces emissions associated with exporting this material, supports the creation of local, family-wage sustaining green jobs, deepens public education and understanding of, as well as community commitments to zero waste programs, and produces rich fertilizer that can be utilized to maintain and preserve parks and community gardens city wide.

To reform our sprawling waste management system, which is severely inadequate, environmentally unsustainable, and disproportionately harmful to environmental justice communities, we need a clear plan, timeline, and investments in programs that will achieve our zero waste by 2030 goal. We urge the council to make necessary amendments, pass these bills and for Mayor Eric Adams to sign them into law as soon as possible.

Thank you,



**TESTIMONY
OF THE
NEW YORK PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP
BEFORE THE
NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT
June 15th, 2022
New York, N.Y.**

Good afternoon. My name is Ryan Thoresen Carson, and I am the Environmental Campaign Coordinator for the New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG). NYPIRG is a non-partisan, not-for-profit research and advocacy organization. Consumer protection, environmental preservation, public health, healthcare quality, higher education affordability, and governmental reforms are our principal areas of concern.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify before the New York City Council Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management on the need for real solutions to the city's solid waste crisis. We support the efforts by Councilmember Nurse and members of the Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management to implement zero waste policies by 2030 in New York City. Our testimony today will focus on the policies and mechanisms that will help the City get there. .

Introduction

We have a solid waste, toxics, and plastic pollution crisis. A January 2022 international report found the world is beyond the toxic tipping point. This scientific study, published in the journal *Environmental Science & Technology*, found that "the total mass of plastics now exceeds the total mass of all living mammals," a clear indication that we've crossed a boundary.¹ Crucially, production of single use plastics shows no signs of slowing down and have been exponentially increasing. Since 1950, there has been a fifty-fold increase in plastic production. This number is expected to triple by 2050.²

The scale of the solid waste issue in New York City is truly massive. Between July 1, 2020, and June 30, 2021 New York City shipped out 3.4 million tons of household trash, up from 3.2 million tons just the year before.³ New York City's solid waste disposal practices place a tremendous burden on environmental justice communities. For one, waste is trucked to garbage transfer facilities that are often in the City's environmental justice communities. Additionally, a large portion of the City's solid waste is then brought to the Covanta garbage incinerator in Newark, New Jersey, in an environmental justice

¹*Environmental Science and Technology*, "Outside the Safe Operating Space of the Planetary Boundary for Novel Entities," January 18, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.1021/acs.est.1c04158>

² Carrington, Damien, "Chemical pollution has passed safe limit for humanity, say scientists," *The Guardian*, January 18, 2022, <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/jan/18/chemical-pollution-has-passed-safe-limit-for-humanity-say-scientists>

³ Goldenberg, Sally, "New York City fails zero waste pledge. Why it's going backward." *Politico*, April 22, 2022, <https://www.politico.com/news/2022/04/22/zero-waste-new-yorkers-recycle-00026708>

neighborhood. The hazards of breathing air contaminated by heavy truck traffic and incinerator emissions is well-documented, including increased rates of asthma and respiratory ailments. On top of that, the cost to the city is tremendous as well, with the total cost of disposal costing the city \$452 million dollars.⁴ Waste reduction efforts will not only clean up our city, but also save taxpayers money.

Zero Waste: Support for Introductions 274 and 275

Since former Mayor Bill de Blasio laid out the goal for a zero waste future for the city, there has actually been an increase in municipal waste.⁵ Many New Yorkers are clamoring for waste reduction, with public polling showing that increased sanitation infrastructure is a top priority for many New York City voters.⁶

Importantly, Introduction 275 mandates annual, detailed reporting from the Department of Sanitation on its progress towards the 2030 zero waste goal, including timelines and annual targets for waste reduction and material diversion through recycling.

Targets are important planning measures in looking forward. However, targets without real world performance data is an incomplete picture. Currently the DSNY website has very little information available on how and to what extent the city is meeting its reduction standards. The annual reports should mandate data on the past year's actual waste reductions and recycling improvements. Further, we propose a public comment process for the City Council to receive feedback on appropriately aggressive annual benchmark targets, in addition to the expertise from the Department of Sanitation.

While New Yorkers support waste reduction broadly, it is essential that the public be able to easily see the progress being made and be educated about current initiatives that will reduce waste over time. Such transparency arms advocates and community leaders with the tools to build support for zero waste goals, and gives community members a snapshot at improvements in their communities. In addition to being submitted to the Mayor and Council Speaker, the annual reports should be made available and easily accessible to the public. Further, a map of waste and recycling progress, organized by community district, should accompany the annual reports and be available to the public.

Lastly, while Introduction 275 mandates an analysis of the available capacity of landfills utilized by the city, it does not require analysis of the impact of the city's continued use of incinerators in neighboring municipalities. While the "capacity" analysis may not be appropriate, a key measurement should be how the city will discontinue incinerator use.

Community Organics: Support for Introductions 244 and 281

Nearly one third of New Yorkers' waste is organic material, creating a unique challenge for the city's waste programs.⁷ While composting is a proven means of reducing this waste, the program was severely curtailed through the pandemic. Curbside compost programs for all New York City residents are essential to meeting our organic waste diversion goals by 2030. Councilmember Hanif's Introduction

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Khurshid, Samar, "How Trash Became a Top-of-the-Heap City Budget Issue," *Gotham Gazette*, May 9, 2022, <https://www.gothamgazette.com/city/11270-trash-top-new-york-city-budget-sanitation-department>

⁷ NYCLV, "NYC Needs Common Sense Waste Management Now," February 22, 2022, <https://nyclv.org/news/nyc-needs-common-sense-waste-management-now/>

244 and Councilmember Power’s Introduction 281 work together to create a citywide residential curbside organics collection program, and mandate three drop-off sites per community district, a fantastic start to making these programs more accessible to residents. NYPIRG urges the City Council to adopt these policies.

Crucially, composting programs will help us battle mounting climate change impacts. NYSERDA estimates that if food scraps were recycled or diverted to composting, large food waste generators could reduce costs and greenhouse gas emissions by 175,448 metric tons annually, the equivalent of taking 37,093 cars off the road. NYSERDA also estimates the cost associated with hauling, tipping (dumping), greenhouse gasses and the damages from disposing of food wastes from large producers is approximately \$41 million annually. If the use of food waste recycling facilities is expanded throughout the state, it could reduce those costs by up to \$22 million a year.⁸

Statewide Policies Can Buoy The City’s Zero Waste 2030 Goal: Extended Producer Responsibility and Bottle Bill Modernization Initiatives

In addition to the Introductions above, statewide policies currently under consideration in Albany can buoy the City’s Zero Waste by 2030 goal, and we urge the Council’s continued support. Firstly, the state should create an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) program. EPR requires companies to be financially responsible for mitigating the environmental impacts of the packaging they use to sell and transport their products. Nearly 30% of the waste stream is packaging, much of it unrecyclable. Other than through deposits on beverage containers through the state’s successful bottle bill, companies have no financial responsibility for the waste management of product packaging, and no requirements to reduce packaging waste or design packaging for recyclability.

Municipalities have no control over the type of packaging materials that companies put into the marketplace, much of which are unrecyclable. Because of this, recycling is confusing for many residents and taxpayers foot the bill for recycling and the disposal of packaging waste into landfills and incinerators. The companies who are creating the packaging waste problem, including plastics and toxic contaminated packaging, should be on the hook for the end of cycle disposal and recycling of their product packaging.

Assemblymember Steve Englebright of Long Island has introduced the country’s most ambitious EPR program to date, which would detoxify and reduce packaging by 50% over the next decade (A. 10185).⁹ We commend the City Council for their support for EPR legislation in the state and urge the Council to pass a resolution of support for Assemblymember Steve Englebright’s model bill.

⁸ NYSERDA, “NYSERDA Report Finds Diverting Food Scraps From Landfills Could Produce Net Benefit of up to \$22 Million Annually,” <https://www.nyserdera.ny.gov/About/Newsroom/2017-Announcements/2017-03-16-NYSERDA-Diverting-Food-Scraps-From-Landfills-Produce-Net-Benefit-22M-Annually>.

⁹Beyond Plastics, “Comparison of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Bills in New York,” May 31, 2022, <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5eda91260bbb7e7a4bf528d8/t/62963bb513b9c25235aafb82/1654012854119/ComparisonNYEPRBills.2022-0524.pdf>

Bottle Bill Modernization

The second statewide policy under consideration is the modernization of the state's highly successful Bottle Bill. This year, Assemblymember Steve Englebright and Senator Rachel May proposed an expansion and modernization of the law (A. 10185/ S. 9164) which would increase the deposit from a nickel to a dime and would expand the types of containers to sports drinks, iced teas, juices, wine, and liquor. Dairy products and infant formulas containers would be exempt. The law has been extremely successful in boosting the state's – and city's – recycling rates and has reduced litter. Expansion would bring immediate and long-lasting financial and environmental benefits to the city's solid waste programs. It is essential that the Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste support efforts to improve the state's Bottle Bill and call upon our elected officials in Albany to act now.

Enacted in 1982, the New York State Returnable Container Act (“the Law”), commonly known as “the Bottle Bill,” requires a 5-cent refundable deposit to be placed on eligible beverage containers. Upon passage, the Bottle Law covered only beer and soda sold in New York. (It was subsequently expanded to cover wine coolers and water bottles.) The Law requires retailers who sell covered beverages to accept returns of empty containers for the products they sell and to refund the deposits. The Law also requires beverage distributors to compensate retailers for the cost of collecting and recycling empty containers by paying them a small handling fee per container.

New York City and other municipal recycling programs are particularly struggling with glass breaking in their recycling streams. When glass breaks in curbside containers it can “contaminate” or render unrecyclable for the municipality much of the other materials. The expansion of the Bottle Bill to include non-carbonated beverage containers, wine, spirits, and hard cider would remove from curbside recycling a significant portion of the glass containers that municipal recycling programs are struggling with.

Even when recyclable materials are not contaminated by broken glass, the costs of recycling containers that are not covered under the state's Bottle Bill can be high. For example, the costs associated with collecting and processing PET plastic bottles and glass per ton are higher than revenues per ton for scrap material.¹⁰ States that have a bottle deposit are 46% more likely to recycle PET plastic bottles than states that do not.¹¹ Expanding the Bottle Bill would reduce or eliminate these costs for municipal programs by creating a financial incentive (the deposit) for consumers to return and an obligation (the law) for retailers to accept these containers, relieving the burden on local government recycling programs.

Municipal curbside programs and bottle deposit programs are more effective together and create a comprehensive approach to recycling. States with Bottle Bills have better recycling rates than non-deposit states. According to the *Container Recycling Institute*, states with Bottle Bills have a beverage container recycling rate of around 60%, while non-deposit states only reach about 24%.¹²

Doubling the bottle deposit would increase the rate of redemption while also boosting the money pocketed by the “canner” community. According to Sure We Can, a Brooklyn non-profit organization,

¹⁰ Container Recycling Institute, “Cost of Curbside Recycling for Beverage Containers,” May 31, 2018, <https://www.container-recycling.org/images/stories/PDF/Fullnetrecyclingcostcurbside10-18-18%20V2.pdf>.

¹¹ Container Recycling Institute, “Container Deposits: The Rockstars of Recycling,” <https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2022/WorkGroups/House%20Natural/Bills/H.175/Witness%20Documents/H.175~Susan%20Collins~Container%20Deposit%20Handout~2-24-2021.pdf>.

¹² Container Recycling Institute, Bottle Bills, www.container-recycling.org/index.php/issues/bottle-bills

an estimated 10,000 New Yorkers are part of New York City’s canning community. Increasing New York State’s deposit will bring new money into the pockets of low-income and unhoused “canners” who clean up empty containers from the streets.

Local redemption centers struggle to keep up with the current economic landscape. While the bottle deposit has remained a nickel, wages and rent have increased greatly over the 40-year history of the law.¹³ If adjusted for inflation, the original five-cent bottle deposit would now be fifteen cents.¹⁴

In addition, advocates are urging that additional revenues also be targeted to expanding redemption opportunities in what they call “redemption deserts” communities that currently lack both adequate access to food stores as well as Bottle Law redemption centers. There are 19 New York City communities that are among those “redemption deserts.” The New York City Housing Authority recently advocated for bringing redemption infrastructure to their buildings. Forty percent of residents already utilize redemption centers while also reporting that non-residents collect redeemables on NYCHA grounds.¹⁵

In order to meet the city’s stated goal of 100% waste reduction by 2030, the state must pass a Bottle Bill modernization program. The City Council’s support is essential.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. NYPIRG looks forward to working with the New York City Council so that the City’s growing solid waste problem is no longer “dumped” in an Newark incinerator, but instead a comprehensive solid waste reduction plan is implemented to achieve the 2030 zero waste goal through reduce, reuse and recycle program improvements with reporting and accountability measures baked in. New Yorkers deserve a much cleaner, more sustainable city grounded in the principles of environmental justice.

¹³ In 1982, the minimum wage in New York was \$3.35. In 2021, minimum wage is \$15 an hour downstate.

¹⁴ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, CPI Inflation Calculator, https://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm.

¹⁵ NYCHA, “NYCHA 2.0 Waste Management Plan.” April 22, 2019.

<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/nycha/downloads/pdf/n20-waste-management-plan.pdf>



Brooklyn Solid Waste Advisory Board

Written testimony to Sanitation & Solid Waste Committee of NYC City Council at the Hearing of 15th June

June 2022

The Brooklyn Solid Waste Advisory Board (BkSWAB) is pleased to present testimony relating to the package of recently introduced Zero Waste bills. We thank the New York City Council's Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management for holding this hearing, and the relevant Council Members for their leadership in introducing and reintroducing these important pieces of legislation. As a reminder, the SWABs exist to advise city agencies and elected officials on matters related to effective management of solid waste.

Universal Residential Composting (Intro 244)

We are cautiously welcoming of a long-awaited piece of legislation that would add an important and equitable approach to tackling the organic component of the city's residential waste; the Council has already established a similar commitment with respect to organics generated by the commercial sector. A comprehensive organics program should include a curbside collection component; elements of this are codified in Local Law 19 of 1989 that targeted leaf and yard waste.

While committing to this is an important step, we offer a number of concerns for your consideration, which are outlined below.

The proposed implementation timeline is very tight - occurring within the coming fiscal year. Considering the number of aborted expansions of the brown bin program already experienced, rushing to implement this legislation risks another expensive and discouraging failure. We therefore urge the DSNY to allow time, proper planning and multiple approaches to increase participation while this vast behavior change takes hold in this diverse city. A citywide curbside

collection program is a huge step: now is the time to step back and reconsider all that we know about food waste, why it exists, its many complexities, and the array of strategies and tactics in active use by cities around the world to reduce its environmental and economic impacts.

The legislation as written also does not consider the interaction with, or impact on, other methods of organic waste management. Numerous other approaches are complementary to curbside pickup and do not involve putting trucks on the streets. Food waste prevention and reduction sits at the top of the food waste hierarchy, yet receives little attention: cutting a proportion of residential food waste at source would eliminate its disposal cost and logistics, alongside the environmental impact. Redistribution programs also reduce costs and emissions while bringing social benefits. Other methods, already in the City's toolkit, are less truck-intensive and may suit certain residents better - including food scrap drop offs, smart bins, and in-sink food waste disposers. These should all be evaluated as part of a comprehensive organics program, and the rollout of the curbside collections should come as an addition to these other initiatives, and not at their expense.

Finally, the budgetary requirement for implementation will be huge. Given the recent struggles to adequately finance Food Scrap Drop Offs and community composting, it is essential that a multi-year commitment to this investment accompany any mandate. It also is vital that expansion of the curbside collections does not cut funding of other zero waste initiatives, or other essential services such as street cleaning; in the longer term, a reduction in organic waste to landfill can and should result in a commensurate reduction in the City's waste export budget. As such, a well planned and budgeted organics program will pay for itself.

Fortunately, the city is on the verge of commissioning a comprehensive review and plan for managing organic wastes as resources – a multi-agency project led by DCAS that is expected to take two years. The city is also at the early planning stage for developing its next comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan, and will begin enforcement this summer of the third and final phase of implementation of LL146, the commercial organics diversion law, while New York state will begin implementation of the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA), with a focus on greenhouse gas reduction. These concurrent efforts can and should feed into an overall organics plan.

A robust planning process that makes a long-term business case for diverting organics, based on data and pilot studies, will therefore be crucial to securing and retaining sufficient funding, and ultimately delivering an effective program. What's most important at this stage is not speed of implementation, but doing the work to get it right.

Zero Waste Mandate and Reporting (Intros 274 and 275)

Intros 275 and 274 would establish a target of diverting 100% of citywide-generated waste from landfill by 2030, create plans for achieving this target, and report on progress annually.

Intro 275 is largely unchanged from Intro 2250 of 2021, and our prior comments on this draft bill stand. BkSWAB supports a planning process towards zero waste that is properly resourced, is fully supported by the Mayor's Office, leverages cross-departmental cooperation (including but not limited to Parks, Buildings, Transportation, Health, and Education), and ties in with existing work such as the new Waste Characterization Study, the state's Climate Action Plan (that will be adopted later this year), and the upcoming 2026 Solid Waste Management Plan.

As it stands, the planning process outlined in Intro 275 is too limited in timescale and scope. If passed, DSNY would have less than a year to create and submit this plan; by comparison, the creation of the Solid Waste Management Plan is a multi-year process, and a Zero Waste Plan would need to be of similar scale. In its scope, the bill makes only a cursory mention of reuse and does not mention waste reduction; it therefore prioritizes recycling as the first step, in lieu of actions higher up the waste hierarchy. By including incineration as a form of diversion from landfill, the bill also does not seek to limit this polluting and deeply inequitable practice as a method of disposal.

Intro 274 would establish a goal of diverting citywide-generated waste by one hundred percent by calendar year 2030, and, should DSNY determine that this is not feasible, make recommendations with respect to policies, programs and actions that may be undertaken to achieve this goal within 180 days.

The 0x30 pledge was first made in 2015. We are now halfway to 2030 and, despite numerous promising initiatives, little genuine progress in reducing waste and increasing diversion has been made. Legislating the 0x30 pledge at this stage shows ambition, but - as with Intro 275 - does not give sufficient depth to create a credible plan. It is unclear how, if at all, the recommendations DSNY must provide "within 180 days of determination" ties in with the planning process mandated in Intro 274; in any case, 180 days is insufficient to create a meaningful set of recommendations.

In summary, BkSWAB supports a zero waste goal and reporting mandate - but the opportunity to create a robust, wide-ranging, data-driven and objectives-focused plan towards zero waste must not be passed up.

Community Organics and Recycling Empowerment (CORE) Act (Intros 280 and 281)

Finally, the CORE Act (Intros 280 and 281) is also broadly similar to that proposed as Intros 1942 and 1943 in 2020. This legislation is an important step towards equity of access to the city's growing array of zero waste and circular economy initiatives, and retains our overall support.

As with Intro 244, the proposed timescales are decidedly ambitious, and would benefit from a more phased approach. With only six months to establish three organics drop-off sites in each community district, and less than a year to establish three community recycling centers in each,

there would be little time to undergo a rigorous selection process for each site. A more suitable approach would be to gradually expand the number of sites in each community district, prioritizing those with fewer facilities, and working to complement each community district's existing organizations, projects and infrastructure.

In order to reduce truck miles, create local jobs and foster goodwill in the community, we recommend equipping as many of the organics drop-off sites as possible with processing capacity, making any finished compost freely available as a community resource, and allowing the transfer of excess yard or food waste between local processing sites.

As far as possible, the Recycling Centers should be sited in the same place as the organics drop-off sites, thereby reducing journeys for residents and potentially providing economies of scale around staffing and logistics. We also recommend ensuring that all NYCHA complexes are sited within walking distance of a drop-off site.

Thank you for your consideration.

The Brooklyn Solid Waste Advisory Board

Brooklyn Solid Waste Advisory Board:

Chair: Oliver Wright; Vice Chair: Shari Rueckl; Secretary: Debbie Herdan; Sergeant at Arms: Elizabeth Royzman;

Members: Akhmose Ari-Hotep, Anne Bassen, Sarah Bloomquist, Kendall Christiansen, Betty Feibusch, Suzan Frazier, Pablo Garcia, Rich Grousset, Elissa Iberti, Kevin Jaksik, Rhonda Keyser, Celeste McMickle, Bella Muccari, Dylan Oakley, Michael Rieser, Claire Sprouse, Vandra Thorburn, Greg Todd

Cafeteria Culture (CafCu) Testimony

New York City Council, Committee on Sanitation - Budget Hearing, June 15, 2022

Thank you, Chair Nurse and Members on the Committee of Sanitation for this opportunity to testify.

I am Debby Lee Cohen, Executive Director and Founder of Cafeteria Culture, the environmental education organization founded as Styrofoam Out of Schools. I am also Co-Director/Producer of the award winning movie, **MICROPLASTIC MADNESS**, starring Brooklyn's 5th grade students from PS 15, a parent, and educator.

Our Cafeteria Culture team is deeply concerned about the dangerous impacts of the overlapping climate and garbage crises on our students, especially our most vulnerable children from Black, Brown, NYCHA, immigrant and Environmental Justice communities in NYC, Newark, and beyond.

I am testifying today in support of this full legislative package with a focus on Int 244, the bill to mandate universal organics collection, which accounts for one third of waste stream and a much higher percentage in NYC schools.

To ensure the success of the long overdue rollout of universal composting and other waste reduction policy, I urge the Council to increase funding to small nonprofit education organizations that are working in cafeterias and classrooms, such as Cafeteria Culture, to support the innovation of timely cafeteria and classroom, interdisciplinary pre-K-12 zero waste/plastic free/ climate education and low-cost, scalable pilot programs. Funding should prioritize NYCHA and Environmental Justice communities.

Cafeteria Culture (CafCu, founded as Styrofoam Out of Schools) works with youth to creatively achieve zero waste/ climate smart schools communities and a plastic free biosphere. We teach innovative environmental education that fosters youth-led solutions by merging citizen science, civic action, media and the arts. By partnering with School Food Directors and students, we catalyzed the elimination of styrofoam trays from New York City schools and other cities.

We are ready to catalyze the elimination of the remaining single-use plastics from NYC school cafeterias, revive refill and reuse models and pilot new methods for dramatically reducing wasted food.

Cafeteria Culture is a member of the Save Our Compost Coalition and a Core Member of the US Break Free From Plastic movement.

Reducing single-use plastics from school food service is an excellent strategy for reducing the contamination of school organics bins and potentially reducing costs, a connection that is not widely understood.

On May 16, 2022, Cafeteria Culture In partnership with OFNS, Office of Sustainability, students, and school staff, led the first New York City-wide Plastic Free Lunch Day. **Over 750 NYC elementary schools had school lunch prepared withOUT plastic on this day, providing a first glimpse of a plastic-free school cafeteria future.** Please [watch our short video](#), created by Cafeteria Culture in partnership with NYC Department of Education (DOE), to see what the buzz was all about. www.plasticfreelunch.org

On May 16, PS 15 in Brooklyn reduced the number of plastic items from school lunch by 72%, or 362 items, or more than 2 pieces of plastic per meal. Imagine that reduction for about 1 million meals served per day in NYC throughout the school year. That would be a reduction of 360 million pieces of plastic per year in NYC. It's totally possible!

Cafeteria Culture is writing on a short report to compare costs of at single-use versus bulk or refillable service for certain items, like individual condiment packets versus pump jars, and reducing plastic film wrapping of sandwiches, which was done for Plastic Free Lunch Day. We look forward to sharing the report later this summer.





Creatively working with youth to achieve zero-waste, climate smart school communities and a plastic free biosphere,

The negative environmental and health consequences of our City's plastic procurement cannot be understated. Reducing the production, use and disposal of plastic advances climate goals. *Plastic begins as a fossil fuel and emits CO2 and greenhouse gases from processing to end of life.* The US produces more plastic waste than any other country. School cafeteria foodware and packaging is a major contributor. **Plastic Free Lunch Day is an important step to reducing unacceptable amounts of school cafeteria plastic which contributes to global plastic pollution and a looming health crisis.**

Removing plastics from school food protects our students from the toxins that migrate from plastic foodware and packaging into food and beverages. Plastic has become so commonplace that we don't question its safety, yet recent studies reveal how thousands of toxic chemicals from plastic readily migrate into food and beverages.

We encourage a middle school student **Sustainability Leadership Certification** and **official DOE high school community service hours** and **climate leadership recognition** that students can list on college, internship and job applications.

When students feel like they have a positive impact on the systems that are broken — systems that are not necessarily working for *them* — and are offered opportunities to bring whatever special gifts that they have to address the problem, they are genuinely excited and engaged. We have witnessed this over and over (watch our movie, [Microplastic Madness](#); please contact us for a screener link).

We applaud the DSNY announcement on the expansion of the School Organics Collection Program to all 1,800 schools. This must include funding for education for students, school staff, and custodial staff. We urge DSNY to update school cafeteria signage to connect plastic and food waste to the climate crisis and to include a "Reduce/Reuse" sign that encourage Share Tables.

Finally, we ask the Council for support on the following:

- **A regular plastic free menu day at all schools and the acceleration of reduction of single-use plastics** in school food service to decrease toxic garbage and to **minimize brown bin contamination**;
- **REUSABLE and REFILLABLE pilots in schools cafeterias** to collect data and feedback and envision what Zero Waste cafeterias will look like;
- **Revision of DOE contract requirements to reward vendors who offer products with minimal packaging & positive sustainable practices**

Thank you,

Debby Lee Cohen and the Cafeteria Culture team



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civicsunited@gmail.com
Mary Arnold, Board Member

June 15, 2022: Mary Arnold, providing public comment today on behalf of Civics United for Railroad Environmental Solutions. We are a Queens-based nonprofit that advocates for Environmental Sustainability and Enhanced Public Health through modernization of freight rail equipment, facilities, and operations. We strongly support the five bills that are being considered today because, specifically, they have the potential to reduce by a third the number of rail cars hauling Queens's and Brooklyn's Municipal Solid Waste to landfills.

Why is this important to more than 750,000 people in Queens who live within a kilometer of the freight rail facilities that handle this waste?

Waste-by-rail is a new industry that started up within the MTA-Long Island Rail Road system in 2008. Yet in 2022, rail cars and containers of landfill-bound waste are still being hauled by ancient high-polluting, noisy 1970's locomotives that were excluded from the Clean Air Act. Environmental and health harms from this new industry are due to the

industry's ability to operate within ongoing state and federal freight rail loopholes, and the capacities of the MTA and LIRR.

As a result, residents of New York City are subjected to toxic diesel pollution that also accelerates Climate Change. If the @40 ancient freight locomotives being used today by the Long Island Rail Road and the New York & Atlantic Railway were retooled to modern standards, it would eliminate the NOx pollution of a million cars.

Another advantage of reducing the number of waste-by-rail cars is that most freight rail operations take place all night long, subjecting residents to harmful explosive noises when they are trying to sleep. Also, residents can't open their windows when foul odors come from punctured MSW containers or open gondolas of crushed Construction and Demolition Debris Residue illegally mixed with Commercial Waste. The C&D rail gondolas don't have solid covers, so they emit particulate pollution blowoff and leachate from the top and out through the bottom of the rail car. Communities by railyards, transfer stations, and landfills that handle waste-by-rail -- including Disadvantaged Communities -- are all similarly harmed.

In response to Council Member Williams's question, waste-by-rail pollutes communities the way it is done now, and New York City's Commercial Waste Zone Law excludes C&D, so it can still be trucked all over the region to and from primitive, polluting facilities. C&D comprises two-thirds of the tonnage that is landfilled. Waste and Scrap are NYS's #1 export by tonnage. The C&D industry operates using the outmoded equipment previously described, and uses open air loading and crushing operations in buildings that have 3 walls and a roof -- even though the business is so profitable that it has attracted foreign investors.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation has had no regional waste management plan or Climate Change plan that addresses these problems. Planning and permitting have been driven by industry competitors. Continuing this type of take-make-dispose linear economy -- subsidized by taxpayers and our families' health and quality of life -- is unsustainable. Building a bunch of new burners as landfills close is not sustainable either. Environmental sustainability and public health require a circular economy where, for example, organics are composted, and gypsum wallboard and other construction materials are recycled and reused instead of being sent to a burner or landfill by truck or rail. These five bills don't solve all these problems,

but are an important step forward. We ask you to advance them. Thank you.

Down to Earth Community Garden has been a center for community based composting for over ten years. In our high density neighborhood where greedy landlords who are not interested in doing the extra work needed to host DSNY brown bins, we filled the gap as our neighbors, the voters, demand this progressive move to improve our environment by composting. Prior to Covid-19 our 24-hour drop-off collected 10.82 tons of kitchen waste of which the garden processed 6.16 tons turning into soil and 4.66 was picked up in brown bins by DSNY. We had 4 bins picked up three times a week. We are drowning in garbage in the East Village and the way that DSNY and private collectors pick up with garbage bags left out overnight for the rats to tear into can be reduced with more access to brown bins and composting of kitchen waste. We tax-payers are battling rats and demand from our city access to composting in every community board and on every block.

Dear Chair Sandy Nurse, speaker Adrienne Adams, co-sponsors, and city council member supporters for your work on promoting residential compost legislation.

My name is Marisa DeDominicis, I am a co-founder and the ED of Earth Matter NY a nonprofit dedicated to reducing the organic waste misdirected into the garbage and incinerator streams by encouraging neighbor participation and leadership in composting.

I fully support

Int. No. 244

Int. No. 274

Int. No. 275

Int. No. 280

Int. No. 281

We hope that the City can also wholeheartedly embrace, support and implement as many educational and infrastructure development initiatives as possible, providing the support needed to work hand and glove to increase the success rates of the mandatory composting we have dreamed of for decades.

Thank you all for your time and work in developing and advocating for these efforts which will help New Yorkers, young and old, to be in a position to participate in composting, a basic way that we can all support climate change mitigation.

Thank you for this opportunity to support these visionary intro bills.

Marisa

**City Council Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management written testimony
06.15.2022**

I'm Laura Sewell, the director of the East Village Community Coalition and a community garden member. We'd like to thank the Chair and Council Members for their leadership on a mandatory curbside organic waste composting program and a path to zero waste for NYC by 2030.

The East Village and Lower East Side are well-known for our activism and do-it-yourself spirit. We were very disappointed when Community Board 3 failed to qualify for the 2022 voluntary sign-up curbside organic waste program. This was not due to lack of interest from residents, who are enthusiastic and committed, or to lack of outreach from community organizations like ours, who helped to spread the word. We kept hearing that the District was very close to qualifying, but too many of our larger landlords would not agree to sign on, or even to respond to DSNY.

For our and most neighborhoods, a mandatory program is the only way to effect change. This doesn't mean it has to be punitive. It could start with a roll-out period, cure orders, exemptions for buildings with less than 4 units, and for elders or others physically unable to comply.

With the local Lower East Side Ecology Center (LESEC) program off-line for the duration of the ESCR project, local residents who want to compost have very limited options. They have to go all the way to Union Square, or keep their compost in their freezer until the Sunday drop-off at Tompkins Square Park. These programs are great, but it shouldn't be so difficult to participate in an activity that's for the greater good: reducing methane emissions from our landfill, sparing our communities the environmental impact of incineration, and sparing our city budget the expense of exporting waste.

We've heard that community residents should be able to drop their compost off with schools who are participating in the school program, but organic waste drop-offs must be attended or gone through, to ensure that only compostable waste is included in the brown bin prior to pick up. The school across the street from my apartment building only puts out one brown bin, and most likely doesn't have the volunteer capacity to handle any more.

There are many community gardens in CB 3, some of whom process compost internally. While very few have the capacity to take on more than their members produce, Down To Earth is a notable exception.

I'd like to share the remarkable work of the handful of dedicated volunteers who processed almost 11 tons of organic waste in 2019, when our district was being serviced by the curbside brown bin program.

They tried to step up to a 24-hour drop-off this year and had to stop. They were completely overwhelmed.

It was entirely disheartening for us to hear the Commissioner report on the lackluster participation in the districts who were able to qualify for the voluntary program, and say that trucks were coming back empty.

In 2019, DSNY picked up 12 brown bins per week from Down To Earth garden. The garden is located between two participating schools, one of which is right across the street, and is two blocks away from Stuyvesant Town. They still have the bins, stored on top of their shed. Is there no way to think outside district lines to immediately include drop-off sites with a proven track record?

We appreciate the Commissioner's interest in data, which we share. Detailed information on the quantities of food waste processed by Down To Earth and El Sol Brillante Gardens can be found here:

<https://downtoearthgarden.org/activities/composting/quantity-of-food-waste-diverted/>

The summary for **2019**, the last full year we were a 24-hour drop-off:

Drop-off total: **10.82 tons**

Processed in garden: **6.16 tons** (56.9%) turned into either amended soil or compost.

Picked up by Sanitation: **4.66 tons** (43.1%) to be composted by DSNY.

The attached tables show (in 1 image file) how much food waste can potentially be processed in-garden (our max capacities warm weather vs cold weather), in contrast to the estimated amount of food waste produced by the T area: all units (households) from buildings along 12th Street from Avenue A to Avenue B, and along Avenue B from 13th St to 11th St; forming a T where Down to Earth Garden is at the T intersection.

Food waste, if all came from the T area* only.

| | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|----------------|
| <u>12th St between Ave A & B</u> | | Average lb/household/week: | 8.4 | | |
| 302 | units north side | 2536.8 | lbs/week | | |
| 199 | units south side | 1671.6 | lbs/week | | |
| 501 | units total | 4208.4 | lbs/week | | |
| <u>Ave B between 13th & 11th St</u> | | | | | |
| 128 | units south side | 1075.2 | lbs/week | | |
| 132 | units north side | 1108.8 | lbs/week | | |
| 260 | units total | 2184 | lbs/week | Current max capacities | |
| | | | | Oct-Mar | Apr-Sept |
| 761 | units total (T area) | 6392.4 | lbs/week | 903 lbs/week | 1,776 lbs/week |
| | | % of total (T area): | | 14.13% | 27.79% |

* T area, is where Down to Earth Garden is at the T intersection of 12th St & Ave B (12th St between Ave A & B, and Ave B from 13th St & 11th St).

Average lb per household per week: 8.4 lbs,
source: <https://www.nycfoodpolicy.org/food-waste-food-by-the-numbers/>

Source (number of units per address): <http://www.oasisnyc.net/map.aspx>

Current max capacities at Down to Earth Garden & El Sol Brillante**

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| Calc. for # of bear bins**: | 25 | bear bins | Avg cap. per bear bin: | 145 lbs |
| | Cold weather Oct-Mar | | Warm weather Apr-Sept | |
| fermentation period: | 4 | weeks per bin | 2 | weeks per bin |
| max cap. qty bear bins: | 0.89 | bear bin(s)/day | 1.75 | bear bin(s)/day |
| max lbs per day | 129.05 | lbs/day | 253.75 | lbs/day |
| max lbs per week | 903.35 | lbs/week | 1776.25 | lbs/week |

** Bear bin = bokashi fermentation containers (airtight 20-gallon containers).
Max capacities are determined by the number of bear bins and how long each bear bin is unavailable while its contents (food waste) are fermenting (4 weeks during cold weather, 2 weeks during warm weather).

We support the bills to mandate drop-off sites by January 2023, but 3 sites per Community District is nowhere near enough for our densely populated neighborhood.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. We look forward to working with you on the development and implementation of these programs.

Laura Sewell
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director@evccnyc.org



**Testimony Submitted by
Equity Advocates' Youth Food Justice Organizers Program
Before the NYC Council Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management**

June 15, 2022

Hello, our names are Joshua, Noumou, Vera, Mehdi, Julio, and Messiah, and we are New York City residents ages 14-22 who are participating in Equity Advocates' Youth Food Justice Organizers Program. Thank you to Chairperson Nurse as well as the staff and members of the NYC Council Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management for holding today's hearing and the opportunity to submit this testimony.

The Youth Food Justice Organizers Program is a cohort of young New York City residents learning about food policy and engaging in advocacy to advance food justice in our communities. Our program is run by Equity Advocates, which builds the capacity of nonprofit organizations to address the underlying causes of food inequity through policy and systems change, and in partnership with Teens For Food Justice, which works to end food insecurity in one generation through high-capacity, school-based hydroponic farming. During our 8-month program, we meet biweekly to learn about urban agriculture policy and local food governance, New York City budget cycle and food funding, how to provide testimony at a city council hearing, and best practices for meeting with policy makers. We have also completed individual research projects, where we researched a current food systems-related bill, and presented our research to our peers.

We urge this Committee to pass [Intro 0244-2022](#) to mandate a universal curbside organics residential program. In March, we submitted written testimony to the Sanitation Committee to advocate for the FY23 City Budget to include fully restored funding to the City's composting programs, including the Organics Curbside Collection, community composting and organic dropoff sites citywide, and the school organics collection program. We then met with Councilwoman Sandy Nurse in May to discuss our unique perspectives on the importance of citywide compost collection in NYC.

As New York City youth, we believe that a citywide compost pickup service is an important solution to our growing problem of waste disposal in New York City. As young people, we have an important and unique stake in this discussion, because the issues of climate change, environmental degradation, and food waste impact the future generations the most. Noumou believes that "composting affects the youth because the actions we take now will have an impact on future generations. For instance, if we didn't compost as much then pollution would probably get worse



progressively.” Mehdi adds that composting “affects the youth because future generations will grow up and take care of the environment so it’s good for the youth to know effective composting.”

Benefits of Composting

As Teens For Food Justice student and alumni advocates, we have all also worked on NYC urban or hydroponics farms and many of us have participated in composting programs directly, so we can attest to the benefits to the community. Messiah explains that “if we compost more, it would get rid of trash on the floor in our communities, make people want to pick up other trash, and create an environment where we care for our environment and communities.” Urban gardeners benefit from the soil created in the composting process and can in turn provide fresh produce for our communities. Joshua believes that “just like we recycle our metal waste and make new things, we should do the same with compost. It’s less popular and not as well understood, but it’s important to use it to make soil. It should be done just like recycling. Waste has to go somewhere and we’d rather use it.” Moreover, waste often builds up in landfills or is incinerated near low-income communities of color, creating racialized public health disparities. Creating a robust compost program is critical to addressing issues of environmental racism in New York City.

Fund and Promote the City’s Composting Program

We urge the City to pass Int. 0244-2022, which will establish a mandatory citywide residential organic waste curbside collection program. We also know that while fully funding this program is necessary, it is not enough on its own without an awareness of how to effectively compost. While Julio believes this is an important issue, he does not have a lot of personal experience with composting. He feels that “one of the issues is lack of awareness around how to compost, why it is important, and how it helps the community.” We are interested in learning more about composting and its benefits. With this in mind, we are very glad to see Int. 0244-2022 includes a focus on education and outreach, specifically that the Department of Sanitation needs to develop an outreach and education program to educate residents about the curbside collection program. As Vera explains, “composting is important and relevant because we have so much waste and this is a great solution for that issue. If all the families in my community start composting, we can reduce the total waste which in exchange would benefit the earth.” Ultimately, a City-Wide composting program is important to the young people of New York City who want to live with a clean environment, racial equity, and a sustainable future.

We thank members of this committee for your valuable time and for holding this important hearing on reducing waste in NYC. We look forward to working with you on your policy solutions that will help make our food system more equitable and sustainable.

Sincerely,
Joshua, 20, Bronx



equity advocates

Noumou, 14, Bronx

Vera, 15, Manhattan

Mehdi, 15, Bronx

Julio, 22, Bronx

Messiah, 20, Bronx

For more information, you can reach out to Jeremy Berger, Equity Advocates' Youth Food Justice Organizer, at jeremy@nyequityadvocates.org.

My name is Aditi Varshenya. I'm a resident of Washington Heights, a community organizer, an urban planning graduate student, and former member of the Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board. I'm here in a personal capacity, but I work on waste and environmental justice issues at the Global Alliance of Incinerator Alternatives, or GAIA, which is a network of grassroots organizations across the world, including here in NY, that are fighting for a more just and sustainable waste system. I am testifying in support of this zero waste legislative package, because zero waste is key to building a resilient city.

It's particularly exciting to see Councilmembers working to strengthen our city's struggling compost program. 40% of the US food supply is thrown out every year – that's around \$165 billion of food getting wasted. Decomposing organic waste in landfills produces methane, a greenhouse gas 84 times more potent than CO₂. Implementing a mandatory citywide composting program with clear timelines, public education, and consequences for landlord noncompliance is necessary to meeting our city's climate goals. Voluntary programs just don't cut it: in my building, as in much of the city, tenants struggle to get our landlord to make basic repairs, let alone an organics collection program, and I've talked to several people in compost eligible zip codes whose requests for brown bins have been denied or outright ignored by their landlords. While scaling up from detached and semi-detached units up to multifamily apartment buildings can be an implementation challenge, this has been successfully implemented in high density cities around the world, like Seoul, Korea¹, and Ljubljana, Slovenia², in addition to other U.S. cities like San Francisco. There, extensive outreach, financial penalties for noncompliance, building waste audits, and technical assistance programs for large generators helped the success of organics collection in large multifamily buildings³. It can be done! In the meantime, community drop off sites for recycling and compost should be set up in conjunction with culturally relevant canvassing and outreach in partnership with local partners, in addition to hours of operation that work for working people with busy schedules. Compost also has a number of local green infrastructure applications, and our city could utilize compost we generate locally to reduce transportation emissions and enhance our resilience: beyond enriching soil and sequestering carbon, compost can remediate land contaminated with lead and other toxics, and its application to soil has enormous stormwater filtration and retention potential.

Much of this legislation's language makes reference to landfills. However, our city sends a good deal of its waste to incinerators: I live in Washington Heights, and like other people living uptown and on the west side of Manhattan, my waste gets sent to be burned in an incinerator in a predominantly working class black and brown community right across the river in the Ironbound neighborhood of Newark. Environmental justice organizers at the Ironbound Community Corporation can tell you more about the devastating health impacts that our incinerated waste has had on their community – incineration is the dirtiest form of energy on the grid, and it emits heavy metals, toxic chemicals, and particulate matter into the air that cause lung and heart

¹ <https://www.no-burn.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Korea-1.pdf>

²

https://zerowastecities.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/zero_waste_europe_CS5_the_story_of_Ljubljana_en.pdf

³ <https://www.paperturn-view.com/us/gaia/gaia-zero-waste-masterplan?pid=MTE115576&p=57&v=2>

diseases, cancers, and developmental disorders. New Yorkers on the east side of Manhattan and further out in Queens send their residential waste to incinerators in Niagara Falls and Pennsylvania's Delaware Valley⁴. Zero waste to landfill is a much-needed goal, but simultaneously, we need to make sure that waste is also kept out of incinerators, and other forms of expensive "waste-to-energy" technology greenwashed as good for the planet. If we set a goal of zero waste to landfills but exclude incinerators, we risk further poisoning environmental justice communities living near incinerators by sending them increasing volumes of our waste.

A report GAIA released last year found that zero waste solutions have an enormous job creation potential. Dumping garbage in landfills or incinerators creates just under 2 jobs per 10,000 tons of materials per year. Meanwhile, for the same volume of waste, reuse creates over 50 jobs, recycling creates up to 320 jobs (depending on the mechanization level of the equipment used) and composting creates 6 jobs⁵. The zero waste waste management strategies that create the most jobs also deliver the best environmental outcomes. I appreciate the approach this legislation takes to disaggregating data by community district as a measure towards equity – hiring for jobs created through this legislative package should prioritize individuals in community districts bearing the brunt of environmental injustice in the city.

Thank you to this committee for raising this important issue today!

⁴ https://bcheney.carto.com/viz/db6e4f87-dc47-4bfd-b5b4-9a5d4d429e34/embed_map

⁵

[https://ilsr.org/new-report-from-global-anti-incineration-alliance-zero-waste-creates-200-times-more-jobs-t
han-landfills-and-incinerators/](https://ilsr.org/new-report-from-global-anti-incineration-alliance-zero-waste-creates-200-times-more-jobs-than-landfills-and-incinerators/)



Written Statement of GrowNYC to New York City Council Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management Hearing Introducing Five Local Laws (Intros. 0244, 0274, 0275, 0280 and 0281) Regarding Zero Waste

June 15, 2022

GrowNYC is pleased to provide input at the request of the City Council on five local laws designed to improve NYC's waste reduction goals. GrowNYC is a non-profit organization that serves more than 3 million New Yorkers every year via food access programs, food scrap drop-off sites, Greenmarkets, community and school gardens, and environmental education in all five boroughs, and we have proudly partnered with the Department of Sanitation (DSNY) to deliver Zero Waste programs since 2006.

We offer our feedback on the following pieces of proposed legislation:

Int. No. 0244-2022 - A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to residential curbside organics collection

Since 2013, GrowNYC has supported DSNY's precedent-setting work to pilot and expand the Curbside Composting program. During that time, we have witnessed the positive impacts that composting has on mental health and public health, by giving people an easy tool for fighting climate change, and by removing bags of rotting food from the city's streets and sidewalks. Based on this experience, we support the goal of expanding Curbside Composting to near-universal scope and mandatory status. We note any composting program should also include NYCHA facilities in order to provide equity and universal coverage.

Int. No. 0274-2022 - A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to establishing a goal of zero waste for New York city by 2030; and

Int. No. 0275-2022 - A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to the goal of zero waste to landfill

GrowNYC wholeheartedly supports the City's goal of Zero Waste by 2030 (0x30). GrowNYC has proudly supported the city's efforts to reach this goal by operating Food Scrap Drop-off and clothing collection sites, Stop 'N' Swap events, and Zero Waste Schools. We support the goals of Intro. 274/275 as a way to reduce global climate change and improve air quality resulting from waste to energy facilities.

Int. No. 0280-2022 - A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to community recycling centers; and

Int. No. 0281-2022 - A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to organic waste drop off sites

GrowNYC continues to support the ambitious and equitable goals outlined in the CORE Act, as we first testified when these laws were introduced in June 2020. Our experience operating Food Scrap Drop-off sites in neighborhoods receiving Curbside Composting

service makes clear that there cannot be an either-or or one-size-fits-all approach to providing universal access to composting services for New York City residents. We know that it will take time for Curbside Composting to become truly universal and that Food Scrap Drop-off sites are a flexible model that can fill gaps in access as the Curbside Composting program expands and improves.

Our concern with these bills is the minimum of 20 open hours per week. Due to the cost of staffing, we fear requiring set hours (which would mean some unstaffed) may result in a shift away from actively managed sites which are critical to educating and engaging New Yorkers in the fight against climate change. Our experience shows that increasing open days and open hours does not have a significant impact on organics intake, but it does substantially increase hauling expenses by virtue of servicing more bins. Additionally, staffed sites with limited operating hours become popular community-gathering events and opportunities for cost-effective education and outreach. We believe there is value in having a diversity of Food Scrap Drop-off site types and hope to see more flexible standards put forth in future revisions to this law.

At GrowNYC, we envision a future where every New Yorker can thrive, and that means a future where every New Yorker is participating in composting and benefiting from the results. We are thankful to Chairwoman Nurse and Councilmembers Hanif and Powers for their legislative leadership, and to the many Councilmembers who have already signed-on to co-sponsor five laws that would push us to dig deep and make substantial progress toward the Zero Waste goal we all know we must achieve.

With gratitude,

GrowNYC

For 50 years, GrowNYC has been transforming communities throughout the five boroughs by giving New Yorkers the tools and resources they need to make our city cleaner, healthier, and more sustainable. Whether it is operating the world-famous network of Greenmarkets, building a new community garden, teaching young people about the environment, or increasing recycling rates through education, GrowNYC is hard at work in your neighborhood. GrowNYC is a privately funded 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization.



**TESTIMONY TO THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT**

INT 0244-2022; INT 0274-2022; INT 0275-2022; INT 0280-2022; INT 0281-2022

Position: Favorable

June 15, 2022 Hearing

Clarissa Libertelli

Community Composter Coalition Coordinator, Composting for Community Initiative

Institute for Local Self-Reliance

clarissa@ilsr.org

On behalf of the Institute for Local Self-Reliance, I am submitting this written testimony in support of the following five proposed Local Laws: *INT 0244-2022; INT 0274-2022; INT 0275-2022; INT 0280-2022; and INT 0281-2022*. Together, these bills would constitute a necessary push toward New York City's zero waste and sustainability goals.

NYC generates 1.8 million tons of waste annually and has set a goal of 90% collection of organic waste by 2030. Therefore, the City requires a robust organics management plan to meet its zero waste goals. Not only would this divert organic waste from ending up in landfills and incinerators, where it releases harmful greenhouse gases, but also it would provide opportunities for job creation, improved soil health, food security, and carbon sequestration.

The City Council's own [2020 policy paper](#) on adaptation to and mitigation of climate change called for an organics recycling mandate, and the NYC Mayor's office's [2021 food policy plan](#) sets the goal of 90% collection of organic waste by 2030. The City recognizes that the biggest opportunity to divert waste from landfill is to capture organic material. However, according to NYC's [2017 waste characterization study](#), organic materials still make up over 1/3 of the city's waste stream in spite of legislation like [Local Law 146](#), which mandates composting for certain large-scale generators of organic waste. This demonstrates that in order to be effective, mandates (such as universal residential composting, *INT 0244*) must be actively enforced.

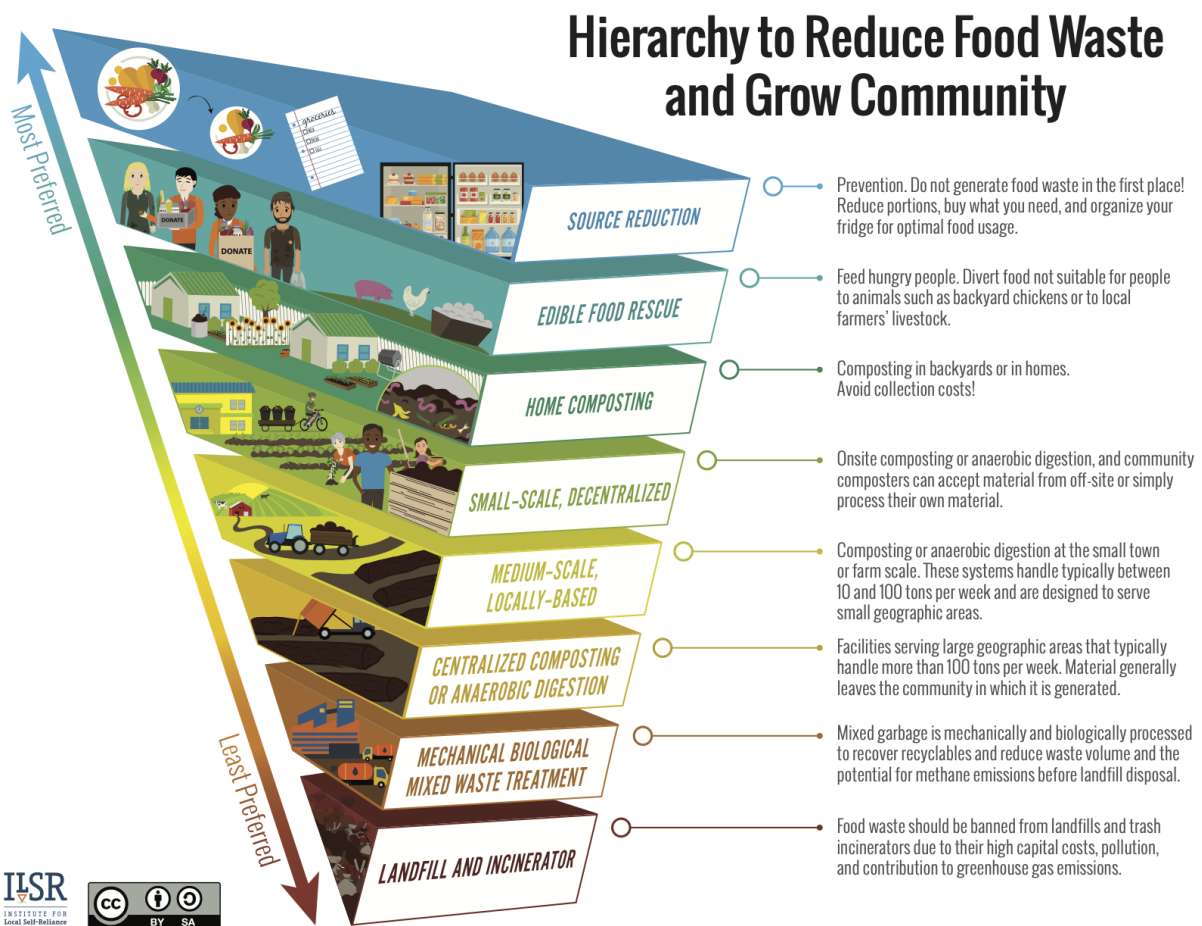
It also demonstrates the need for composting programs that are distributed, well-funded, widespread, and accessible, which is why we believe that both drop-off and residential programs are critical. Residential collection in particular is convenient and therefore tends to see higher participation.

Increasing the number of drop-off sites and their operating hours is also a key component to accessibility and high participation. Living in Bedstuy, I can attest to the inconvenience of my closest GrowNYC drop-off site being open for only a handful of hours on a Saturday. In addition, the site is a 20 minute walk from my apartment. This may not sound like much, but in comparison to the ease of throwing food scraps in the trash, one can see that it is enough to discourage the large-scale behavior change we need.

Finally, we ask that the City’s composting programs prioritize partnerships and funding for community-oriented, locally-based, and smaller scale composters and compost collection services. This would allow New Yorkers to directly experience the potential community benefits of composting, such as green neighborhoods, job creation, and healthy food.

Small and medium sized sites are capable of scaling up to create the robust distributed and diverse infrastructure that NYC needs. See ILSR’s [Hierarchy to Reduce Food Waste & Grow Community](#) (included below as an attachment).

Thank you for taking action on this. I urge you to pass this set of bills.



My name is Mary Krieger. I am a member of the compost team at It's Easy Being Green, an UWS neighborhood environmental group. I am testifying today in support of Intro0244-2022, the bill which sets a deadline for mandatory composting in residential buildings. Thank you to Council Member Hanif for introducing it and to my council member Gale Brewer and the other co-sponsors.

Four years ago, I decided to work in my neighborhood to support Curbside Composting because 34% of the waste stream is compostable. Keeping organics out of landfills means less CO₂ and, more importantly, methane, is released into the atmosphere. New York can only meet its 2030 carbon reduction goals if composting is available and mandatory for all New Yorkers.

My teammates and I have talked to our neighbors at block parties, subway stops and educational events. We've met with residents, board members, supers, building managers and owners. Without exception, stake holders in participating buildings are enthusiastic about the program. Supers like it especially because the buildings stay cleaner and the bins are rodent-proof. After a Department of Sanitation outreach worker answered questions at a kitchen container give away event in my building, several residents told me they were going to compost and the building compost increased accordingly.

Unfortunately, our efforts have reached only a fraction of the buildings in our neighborhood. There are buildings where tenants want composting, but the management or landlord does not understand the program and is not responsive. I am confident that a mandatory composting program with appropriate outreach can overcome the inertia of stakeholders who are not yet participating. The

climate crisis affects all of us. Curbside composting is a way we can all do our part to create a sustainable city.

I urge you to pass the mandatory composting bill as well as the other bills in the package and to provide the necessary funding.

Addendum to Testimony for June 15 Department of Sanitation and Waste Management Hearing

As a person who has engaged at a grassroots level with neighborhood stakeholders both before the pandemic and after the pandemic to improve participation in the Curbside Composting Program, I strongly disagree with the commissioner of the Department of Sanitation's viewpoint that the program should remain voluntary for an unspecified time to allow for education.

The voluntary composting model is a flawed model. Previously, the Sanitation Department had no mandate from the City Council for a mandatory program so a voluntary program was its only alternative. Now the Department is being given that mandate. No matter how "easy" the commissioner makes it for people to sign up, an opt-in model for the huge number of people in New York is just unworkable. While educational outreach is important and helpful, in itself it is not sufficient to motivate every household in New York to compost. For example, people in my building had the opportunity to compost before the pandemic. After the pandemic an outreach worker came to our building to answer questions and give out free kitchen containers to make it easy to collect food scraps. While the event was successful and more people began composting, only 50% of the people compost. This level of participation will not allow New York to meet its climate goals. Clearly, making composting only available and easy is not enough. It must be mandatory.

In addition to the overall shortcomings of the voluntary model, there are several practical considerations. There have already been two roll-outs of voluntary composting. The second rollout simplified the process by removing a site visit requirement and incorporated some of the feedback the department received from community groups. However, the need to cut costs by having more efficient routes and fewer districts lead to a convoluted selection process. The roll-out of a third voluntary roll-out will require another enrollment system and magnitudes more personnel to process and create and continually update new routes. It will require updating some informational material on the website. It will add to the confusion of the public. Presumably, at some point after the third roll-out, a 4th rollout will be necessary for a mandated program. Since we know that voluntary composting doesn't work, why not skip the wasted effort of a third voluntary rollout and go straight to mandatory composting? Concerns about people being fined because they don't understand the program can be addressed by increasing outreach and providing a grace period before fines are assessed. While some managers and boards are open to composting, others will not answer emails or enroll unless it is required. These stakeholders will only take composting seriously if it is mandated.

I fear that the roll-out of a third toothless city-wide voluntary program will waste valuable time and be as ineffective as the first two rollouts. Let's put our energy into creating a mandatory program and funding the construction of infrastructure that can handle the compost.

Mary Krieger (It's Easy Being Green; Jewish Climate Action Network-NYC)

Written Testimony City Council Sanitation Committee

June 15, 2022

Maggie Clarke, Ph.D.

I'm Maggie Clarke, Ph.D. chair of the Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board's Long Range Planning and the Waste Prevention and Reuse committees. The SWAB was established as advisory to the City by Local Law 19 of 1989 the mandatory recycling law. I'm also on the National Recycling Coalition Board and chair its committees on Sustainable Disaster Debris and the Zero Waste library.

MSWAB has been urging the City to implement a zero waste plan since we wrote a 200 page plan for the City in 2004, and we are delighted that the new City Council has proposed zero waste legislation early in its first year. But we have some suggestions on how to make these initiatives even better.

MSWAB just drafted a comprehensive zero waste bill that builds on the original mandatory curbside recycling law from 1989, laying out a schedule to achieve zero waste with mandates every year for the next 10. We include the link here:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1gbQdYsNQ-We9VAeSBPTFf6nsKkWGIU3z8ADqDTgsUNU/edit?usp=sharing>

Our bill has provisions to move the City towards

1. universal availability of curbside organics collection,
2. 100% program participation using well-tested and funded, targeted, multi-approach, consistently applied, motivational education materials, media and campaigns, with effectively designed and implemented enforcement and
3. instituting waste prevention initiatives and reuse infrastructure across the City.

The following is a 1 page factsheet summarizing provisions that should be in a successful zero waste bill:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/10fxhYvBxntJ5AS23jToS7efjdxTf4ZTA/edit?usp=sharing&oid=106550738022132184478&rtpof=true&sd=true>

This is a short summary of the legislative justification for our bill:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/14H9SSv_c-EowdjcX8eCF46ht2JzifJk3/edit?usp=sharing&oid=106550738022132184478&rtpof=true&sd=true

Our bill directs the City to develop, tweak and perfect pilot educational programs to maximize participation by all demographics and personality types, including those who are ready to participate, and those who need special encouragement, incentives and increased fines for not participating. Our bill also makes it clear that the City Council and the Borough Solid Waste Advisory Boards are partners in designing and administering initiatives to reach zero waste to landfill AND incinerator. The SWABs used to have input into DSNY long range planning and design of educational materials prior to Mayor Giuliani, who dismantled important parts of the recycling program staff. He also muzzled the staff. We must return to the way it was before to reach the mandates we have recommended.

In order to get to zero waste in 10 years we will absolutely need sufficient budget to fund all these programs. We know that we are wasting hundreds of millions of dollars per year exporting our resources to be burned and buried and we must get that money and the resources back. This major reallocation must begin immediately in order to set up the education, enforcement and collection programs, studies, pilots. I wrote budget testimony laying all this out in detail:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1XJbhz0uf4XLixPgkmtF_PfKcZv_2sPtW/view?usp=sharinghttps://drive.google.com/file/d/1XJbhz0uf4XLixPgkmtF_PfKcZv_2sPtW/view?usp=sharing

We hope the City does pilots as they did before the 1993 curbside recycling program. Studying mandatory, universal, curbside pilots right away in the 7 districts would be a good start. Every year, add more pilot areas, covering a greater diversity of demographics, readiness to participate, and housing densities should be added.

In the new waste characterization study the City must also measure the types, quantity and condition of repairable and reusable goods left at the curb, and plan and build reuse infrastructure. MSWAB has been testifying for a reuse characterization study since 1989. The reason for waste characterization studies is to design infrastructure, collection routes, marketing, etc for recyclables and organics. But many items characterized as recyclable also fall into categories with reuse and prevention potential: durable goods, nondurable goods, and packaging. EPA's pie charts show this clearly. Our fact sheet What Is Zero Waste shows this pie chart and links each slice to the types of programs that can be used to address these resources.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PkkOWFFUpRkStEG5Dn79vakl_Rkgs6za/view?usp=sharing

The City can say it wants to achieve zero waste and put money into trucks and other infrastructure. But without public participation, we can't achieve zero waste. DSNY gave Grow NYC and now BIG Reuse some responsibility for this but not enough funding. DSNY education programs need to be revamped and well funded. Austin, TX achieved 85-95% participation after they spent \$1/household/MONTH. Both Seattle and San Francisco have been spending over \$3/person/year. We spend 86 cents per person per YEAR. We have a lot of catching up to do.

Behavior science tells us the universe of people is divided into 5 types based on readiness to participate in recycling programs. A simple brochure will convince an eager beaver. Others require convenience (e.g. curbside with kitchen organics bins). Others need to know others in their neighborhood, family or culture are participating. Others need incentives like Save As You Throw, and still others require heavier disincentives for not participating (bigger fines.)

Pay as you throw has been used in many thousands of big cities and small towns and all the major perceived drawbacks have been addressed creatively and effectively since 1990 when EPA was encouraging all jurisdictions to treat disposal as any utility like electricity, where conservation is rewarded.

We have a lot of written materials on these things and look forward to sharing them with you.

MANHATTAN SOLID WASTE ADVISORY BOARD (MSWAB)

ORGANICS COMMITTEE - SANITATION COMMITTEE HEARING TESTIMONY

June 15, 2022

I am Allison Allen, Member of the MSWAB and chair of its organics committee.

We support all the zero waste bills and thank all council members that have solidified NYC's commitment to Zero Waste by 2030, as we have fallen way behind. MSWAB has separately provided suggested amendments for these bills that outline ideas for how best to advance toward city wide mandatory organics collection, zero waste goals and also for what we should do immediately to raise awareness and participation in the brown bin program.

We suggest that organics collection be made mandatory immediately in the 7 districts that currently receive organics collection service. These districts should be redefined as pilots to test and tweak a variety of marketing and outreach tactics to determine what works best to maximize resident participation, before a city wide rollout. The districts should also be revised to make them more representative of the overall city population as the current 7 districts are 22% more white than the population.

Anyone who is concerned about how their NYC taxpayer dollars are spent should be made aware that the cost of not having a mandatory organics program is actually greater than the cost of having it.

The city is spending approximately \$193M in FY23 paying waste haulers to transport just the organic waste to bury in landfills and burn in incinerators that pollute their local communities (including the Ironbound in Newark). That does not include the significant environmental, social, health and opportunity costs ([as outlined by IBO](#)), which brings our annual cost to discard organics alone, to almost a quarter billion dollars in FY23:

- Fiscal Cost = \$193M for organic export/bury/burn
- Environmental Costs - \$28M/FY23 - the cost of carbon and methane emissions from burning and burying organic waste
- Opportunity Costs - an estimated additional \$12-22M/FY23 of lost revenue forfeited for compost & clean energy sales
- Environmental Justice/Social Costs - polluted communities burdened with incalculable but SIGNIFICANT health impacts
- Rat Mitigation - cost savings unknown
- TOTAL \$233M + unknown costs

After Fresh Kills landfill was closed in 2001, the city chose waste export as the alternative for disposing of waste. It's clear that waste export is not a sustainable, long term waste management policy and it's way past time to pivot away from this harmful process which has cost the city approximately \$4 billion over the last 10 years, in fiscal costs alone.

Those billions could have been much better spent improving the recycling program, building the local infrastructure and educational outreach required to divert the valuable organic material for compost and clean energy, processing it locally into a commodity and creating green jobs, while reducing the environmental and social harms. Organic waste makes up 41% of NYC's exported residential waste stream. Let's cut our losses now, combat climate change, help the environment and environmental justice communities and reduce the number (and stink) of black garbage bags clogging our streets and sidewalks.

We have no choice but to pay now or pay much more later if we continue with ever increasing waste export costs, now projected to skyrocket due to inflation. FY24 costs could likely reach half a billion dollars, but if we start diverting more organic material immediately we can gradually bring these export costs down going forward, earmarking those savings for investment in the infrastructure and operational elements required to build and market a robust organics program locally. Taxpayers should be made aware that mandatory organics collection is the much better fiscal, environmental and social alternative.

LEVERAGE NYC'S RAT PROBLEM: With all the recent interest and focus on containerized waste pilots, I urge all Council Members to include and amplify the message that we already have a free rat proof, waste containerization program available to residents with DSNY's brown bin program. Any talk and messaging about litter, rats and containerization should also mention the existing brown bin program for collecting organic waste. It is all interrelated and we need the brown bins to get the same amount of press coverage as the rats! However, the curbside collection program is rarely mentioned in press articles that cover rats, containerization or litter. Rats are likely to continue to make news and we need to better leverage their free earned media to promote the brown bin program.

LEVERAGE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & BUDGET: There are also many missed opportunities in conjunction with the Department of Health Rat Portal/Academy and related communications programs. We need to ensure DOH does MUCH more to promote the free brown bin program in conjunction with 311 rat complaints and on the rat portal. We need to better connect those dots and leverage their significant budget as it does not appear that DSNY ever receives adequate marketing budget which has likely contributed to the dismal recycling diversion and participation rates.

For example, anyone calling 311 with rat complaints should be provided information about the brown bin program. Information on enrolling in the brown bin program should be provided on the online rat portal as well as any and all rat related touchpoints. Please note my email on this issue, pasted below, which I sent to DOH last year. COVID was apparently the excuse for not being able to change anything, but this is simple stuff and the COVID crisis has subsided for now.

Recently, a MSWAB member (along with hundreds if not thousands of other New Yorkers) received a mailed letter from DOH, alerting her to a high level of rat reports in

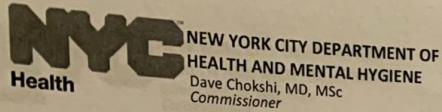
her area. The letter (pasted below) was mailed and contained a one page bulleted list of what she should do about rats. It would have cost nothing to have included an additional bullet about the free brown bin program with encouragement to enroll as a rat mitigation tactic. As this was a mailer, there could have easily been a separate insert included with information on the curbside organics program. This could be done at minimal (if any) additional cost and should start immediately. I have personally asked DOH (see my email pasted below), but we need Council Members to make this request to make it happen. Council Member Velasquez may be able to best spearhead as she serves on both the sanitation and health committees.

Building owners and property managers in areas where rat populations are high should also be targeted with information on the curbside organics program. Currently DSNY requires building owners and managers to sign up for the program to receive service and they are a proven significant roadblock. They need to be informed about the connection between rats and organics left in easily opened plastic bags. I have obtained a testimonial letter from a building super that indicates how his building is cleaner, chute costs reduced and other benefits. We need more materials like this and word of mouth shared amongst building management, wherever possible.

We also see a new package of rat related bills introduced by Council Members Abreu, Nurse and Bottcher. One of the bills requires covered trash receptacles in areas with repeated rodent infestations. These areas should also be considered for immediate mandatory organics collection. Remove the food from the trash and the rats will move elsewhere. As these Council Members are out talking about these new rat bills and addressing the rat problem, there is a perfect opportunity to also incorporate messaging about how important it is to enroll in the brown bin program as a free way to containerize food waste NOW - whether or not your area is one of the 7 existing districts receiving service, so that DSNY can quantify the demand. We suggest that areas that index highest for rats also receive mandatory curbside organics collection services immediately.

Thank you!

LETTER/MAILER RECEIVED FROM DOH RE: RATS - SHOULD INCLUDE INFO ON ENROLLING IN DSNY BROWN BIN PROGRAM



WARNING: False statements made herein are punishable as a class A misdemeanor pursuant to section 210.45 of the Penal Law. Affirmed under penalty of perjury.

What you should do next:

1. Inspect your property. Thoroughly investigate your property for signs of rats and other conditions that contribute to rats. Review your enclosed inspection report and visit the Rat Information Portal (www.nyc.gov/rats) for more information on how to identify droppings, active rat runs, and evidence of gnawing, tracks or burrows. You may choose to hire a licensed pest management professional to assist you with this problem. The Rat Information Portal (www.nyc.gov/rats) will help you select a pest management professional that can help you identify conditions that have led to the presence of rats on your property and manage the problem safely.
2. Clean up your property. Sweep up droppings and wash away rub marks. This will discourage rats from returning.
3. Keep rats from getting the food they need. Store garbage in hard plastic or metal containers with a tight fitting lid. Do not put garbage out on the street more than one hour before pickup.
4. Eliminate the places rats can hide, nest and breed. Remove clutter and debris from your yard, basement and landscaping. Pest-proof your property by repairing holes and cracks.
5. Talk to others on your block. Managing rats is a community affair, and your property is probably not the only one that has signs of rats. Everyone in a neighborhood has to work together to solve the problem, since rats can quickly move from one property to the next. Neighbors can coordinate cleanup efforts, share in the hiring of licensed pest management professionals, and have a bigger impact by working together.
6. For more information on rat prevention download the guide "Preventing Rats on Your Property" at www.nyc.gov/rats or contact 311 and request a copy of the booklet.

Allison Allen's 2021 email to Dept of Health asking for additional brown bin mention/promotion on Rat Portal & 311 complaints

Thanks so much for getting back to me! I will sign up for an event, but I see so many more opportunities to promote the brown bin program via other DOH channels as you manage rat complaints for the city.

For example, would be great if info on the brown bin program could be added to various pages of your website, so the info is available to the general public, including those that call into 311 with rat complaints. These pages (and others) would be a great place to promote the link between deterring rats by enrolling in curbside composting (or taking your food waste to a local food scrap drop off site):

<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/rats.page>

<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/rats-working-in-your-community.page>

<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/rats/2021/what-happens-to-your-rat-complaint.pdf>

Also, can the info be pushed out to those buildings that have been found to have rat activity - per your portal? Do you have a way to send out a mass email?

<https://a816-dohbsp.nyc.gov/IndicatorPublic/Rats/>

As your agency is on the front line combatting rats, I'm hoping you can promote this resource via any and all channels available to you, including social channels. I see that you posted the rat academy events on twitter, but would be great to promote the brown bin program to residents and how it's another tool for controlling rats if you have a rat problem in your area. Would help reach those people who aren't able to sign up for the rat academy

I'm happy to help in any way as rats are a real problem for so many New Yorkers while there is a great, free, solution available which will also help divert organic waste from the mainstream to produce compost and clean energy. Food waste comprises 41% of the waste the DSNY exports to landfills where it emits harmful greenhouse gases, so there are so many reasons to enroll in this program!

Textiles Testimony for 6/15 Sanitation Hearing

Good afternoon and strap in. My name is Sharon Silbermann and I'm here speaking as the Chair of the Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board's Textile Waste Committee. Textiles should NEVER be WASTE, so maybe it should be the Textile WASTE PREVENTION Committee.

I notice you all are wearing clothes today. You'll likely change your outfit after work and perhaps again when you go to bed tonight. DO you know where they came from? The thousands of hands that had a part in making them? The distance they traveled to get to you? The unbelievably complex supply chain involved?

My 2 minutes would never do it justice, but, with 30 years design and manufacturing experience, and as the daughter of a fashion buyer, I will tell you that I speak on behalf of the 1 in 8 people on the PLANET EARTH whose livelihood in some way is connected to making the clothes on your person and in your closets, that apparel and textiles ARE NOT TRASH.

For all of us who call New York City, our very own global fashion capital, HOME, it is embarrassing that just our residents ARE FORCED to throw **400 million pounds** of apparel and textiles into our municipal solid waste stream annually. Our charities are overrun with donations. A small FRACTION of that gets re-sold and STILL there are unfathomable leftovers that get bundled and shipped back overseas to foreign markets not large enough to absorb this excess and, in turn, get dumped on their beaches, and in their oceans and deserts.

We are SHOCKINGLY OVER Consumptive and yet, our domestic fashion and textile designers and manufacturers source virgin materials because they are deceptively cheap, and there is not enough recycled fiber, at scale, to satisfy the demand to create new apparel. Virgin production of fiber into textiles accounts for the MAJORITY of GHGs produced and the water and energy used in the agricultural, extractive, and manufacturing processes. Recycled fibers cut that demand by **XX%**!

With today's technology capable of textile to textile recycling, why aren't we investing in and legislating for building a CIRCULAR TEXTILE INDUSTRY infrastructure RIGHT HERE IN NEW YORK CITY? We have both Circular City AND Zero Waste Initiatives!

Apparel and textiles are responsible for 8% of GLOBAL GHG Emissions, an amount equal to that of all maritime and commercial flight COMBINED!

In NYC, THIS CATEGORY is 6% of our municipal solid waste, according to the 2017 NYC Department of Sanitation's own characterization study. The fashion industry is forecasted to grow by 63% by 2030, our climate crisis deadline for lowering GHGs by 50%! So we ARE TELLING YOU, THAT YOU must take bold legislative and infrastructure-building action NOW.

Go home tonight and look at your closets and all the things you barely use. Look at your expenses on clothes, shoes, sheets, blankets, towels, pillows, upholstered furniture, and kitchen linens. At scale, recycled content should cost no more than virgin content whose real cost is never realized in the environmental and health harms it causes. This is the basis for the need for effective Textile EPR legislation, for imbedding block chain for both transparency to consumers and fiscal responsibility by manufacturers when their products defy technology's recycling capabilities and cost taxpayers unnecessary landfilling and incineration (waste management). In NYC, 6% of our waste stream costs \$XXX - 193? Million annually - money we should be spending on curbside collection and drop off, education, sorting, and building circular recycling infrastructure. Apparel and textiles, especially when 65% of our wardrobes are polyester, do not biodegrade EVER and the natural fiber content does not degrade in anaerobic landfill conditions.

If you do not take action now, do not complain later when the mysterious cancer caused by microplastics that make it into our waterways and food supply and your liver or kidneys or chests or disrupt your childbearing capability. Do not complain when climate change irreversibly causes global food scarcity, unbridled inflation, and shortens you and your children's lifespans, all for the love of overpacked closets and an industry with no environmental and labor limitations for the last 300 years. (Cotton planted and picked by slaves, the explosion of polyester in part due to fossil fuel subsidies, the Triangle Shirt Factory fire, and RANA Plaza prove this.)

You are in possession of both the facts and the political power to change this scenario NOW. USE your position to make the only choice that makes any sense. And PLEASE let us help you create effective legislation and implement measures to achieve Zero Waste for apparel and textiles!

Written Textiles Testimony Submission for 6/15/22 Sanitation Hearing

My name is Sharon Silbermann, submitting this testimony as the Chair of the Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board's Textile Waste Committee. Textiles aren't WASTE, so it should be the Textile WASTE PREVENTION Committee.

We'll likely change outfits 2-3 times today. But DO you know where your clothes came from? The thousands of hands that had a part in making them? The distance they traveled? The unbelievably complex supply chain involved?

This short, written testimony could never do this topic justice, but, with 30 years of fashion design and manufacturing experience, and as the daughter of a fashion buyer, I speak on behalf of the 1 in 8 people, globally, whose livelihoods, in some way, are connected to making your clothes, that apparel and textiles ARE NEVER TRASH.

For all who call New York City, our very own this global fashion capital HOME it's embarrassing that we ARE FORCED to throw **400 million pounds** of apparel and textiles into our municipal solid waste stream annually. Our charities, overrun with donations, re-sell all they can and STILL there are unfathomable quantities of leftovers that get bundled and shipped back overseas to foreign markets not large enough to absorb this excess and, in turn, it's get dumped on their beaches, and in their oceans and deserts.

We're SHOCKINGLY OVER Consumptive and yet, our domestic fashion and textile designers and brands source virgin materials because they're deceptively cheap, and there's not enough recycled fiber, at scale, to satisfy the demand to create new apparel. Production of virgin fiber into textiles accounts for the MAJORITY of GHGs produced along with the water and energy used in the agricultural, extractive, and manufacturing processes. Recycled fibers cut that demand by eliminating virtually all virgin fiber processing!

With today's technology capable of textile to textile recycling, why aren't we investing in and legislating for building a CIRCULAR TEXTILE INDUSTRY infrastructure RIGHT HERE IN NEW YORK CITY? We have both Circular City AND Zero Waste Initiatives!

Apparel and textiles are responsible for approximately 8% of GLOBAL GHG Emissions, an amount equal to that of all maritime and commercial flight COMBINED!

Per the 2017 NYC Sanitation waste characterization study, TEXTILES are 6% of our waste stream. Their collection, transportation and disposal in landfills and incinerators cost \$93 million in 2018. Textiles are also the fastest growing of all waste stream categories. The fashion industry itself is forecasted to grow an additional 63% by 2030, our deadline for lowering GHGs by 50%! If unaddressed this will increase NYC's textile waste costs to \$151 million in just 8 years! This money should be spent on curbside collection and drop off, education, sorting, and building circular recycling infrastructure. Apparel and textiles, especially when 65% of our wardrobes are polyester, do not biodegrade EVER and the natural fiber content does not degrade in anaerobic landfill conditions.

So we ARE TELLING YOU, our elected City Council members THAT YOU must take bold legislative and infrastructure-building action NOW.

Go home tonight and look at your closets and all the things you barely use. Look at your expenses on clothes, shoes, sheets, blankets, towels, pillows, upholstered furniture, and kitchen linens. At scale, recycled content should cost no more than virgin content whose REAL COST is never realized in the environmental and health harms it causes. This is the basis for the need for effective Textile EPR legislation, for imbedding block chain for both transparency to consumers and fiscal responsibility by manufacturers when their products defy technology's recycling capabilities and cost taxpayers unnecessary millions in landfilling and incineration (waste management) fees.

If you do not take action now, do not complain later when the mysterious cancer caused by microplastics that make it into our waterways and food supply and your liver or kidneys or chests or disrupt your childbearing capability. Do not complain when climate change irreversibly causes global food scarcity, unbridled inflation, and shortens you and your children's lifespans, all for the love of overpacked closets and an industry with no environmental and labor limitations for the last 300 years. Cotton planted and picked

by slaves, the explosion of polyester in part due to fossil fuel subsidies, the Triangle Shirt Factory fire, and RANA Plaze all prove this and point to history repeating itself when we don't learn from these horrors and take little to no corrective action. The planet itself and our ability to thrive here are the risk we are currently taking. We MUST DO EVERYTHING we can NOW to avoid an IRREVERSIBLE global climate impact.

You are in possession of both the facts and the political power to change this scenario NOW. USE your position to make the only choice that makes any sense. And PLEASE let us at the Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board help you create effective legislation and implement measures to achieve Zero Waste for apparel and textiles!

My contact is below; please reach out with any questions or requests.

Thank You!

Sharon Silbermann

Chair, Textile Committee, Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board

sharonsilbermann@gmail.com

MSWAB TESTIMONY - SANITATION COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING - June 15, 2022

Good morning and thank you for holding this hearing! My name is Diana Blackwell, & I'm not only Co-Chair of the Manhattan SWAB's NYCHA Recycling Committee but a 20+ year NYCHA resident. Today I would like to remind City Council the importance of including NYCHA buildings in the City's plan for a residential curbside organics collection program.

Waste equity in New York City means not only removing the unequal burden of pollution caused by waste removal, but providing equal access to waste collection for all communities. While we were encouraged by Council Member Hanif's mandatory city wide organics collection bill, the Manhattan SWAB is concerned to see that public housing has thus far been excluded from the bill's proposed organics collection services.

It is imperative that public housing and NYCHA apartments be included in any waste collection legislation from the beginning, to ensure equitable access to waste services for residents and equitable development of city-backed sustainability programs. NYCHA's dismal recycling rate of just 1.5% is a testament to how a subsection of the City can fall behind when it is excluded from mandatory legislation for over 25 years. Including NYCHA in the decision-making and program design of the organics collection rollout avoids future challenges in the unequal infrastructure development and staffing procedures that NYCHA is currently navigating with recycling. Enhanced access to recycling and organics collection is also part of the [NYCHA Sustainability Agenda](#), and including NYCHA buildings in Council Member Hanif's bill would greatly support this goal.

For the [1 in 15 New Yorkers who are NYCHA residents](#), inclusion in the mandatory organics program shows that they, too, can help their City battle the climate crisis by composting their organics. Residents are ready and willing to learn and to participate.

We urge City Council to revise the bill to include mandatory organics collection for ALL New Yorkers. Thank you.



June 15, 2022

**Testimony of Matt Malina
on behalf of NYC H2O**

**before the New York City Council Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management
Public Hearing on: Zero Waste and Composting
Intros 0244, 0274, 0275, 0280, and 0281**

Thank you, Chair Nurse and Members of the New York City Council Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management, for your leadership in convening this hearing and providing the opportunity to deliver public testimony on the need for City Council oversight of, and recommitment to, New York's Zero Waste goal.

My name is Matt Malina and I am the Director and Founder of NYC H2O. NYC H2O's mission is to inspire and educate New Yorkers of all ages to learn about, enjoy, and protect their city's local water ecology. Our activities promote science-based knowledge of New York's local ecosystems and of what is needed for urban water resilience in a time of escalating climate change impacts. Every year we bring hundreds of volunteers to waterfronts across the city to pick up trash and see firsthand the devastating impact poor waste management has on our local waterways. One thing we always emphasize is that there is no "away": throwing trash in your garbage does not make it disappear. For this reason, I am here testifying today in support of the Zero Waste Legislative Package that will mandate residential curbside organics; increase organic composting and recycling accessibility across all communities; and require the City to meet our 2030 waste diversion goals.

NYC H2O has been organizing educational programming and advocacy campaigns around the City's Zero Waste by 2030 goal since it was announced in 2015. We supported the goal then and believe it remains essential for the City to meet its broader climate change and environmental justice goals. Intros 0274 and 0275 would codify this goal and require reporting on its progress.

Additionally, we know that around one third of our current waste stream is made up of compostable material. Not only does this material release the greenhouse gas methane when dumped in a landfill, but we also see this as throwing away money. Compostable material is a valuable resource that can be turned into rich soil to nourish our greenspaces and urban agriculture. Part of creating a sustainable, circular economy is closing loops like this to make

consumption regenerative. The previous piecemeal efforts to roll out composting have been ineffective, so we need to go big and implement a citywide program, like the one created by Intro 0244. Intros 0280 and 0281 support this goal by ensuring that community drop-off sites are equitably distributed.

Finally, I would also like to draw your attention to another issue: illegal dumping. For the past six years, a major focus of NYC H2O has been leading a coalition of community groups to protect and preserve the Ridgewood Reservoir in Highland Park. We see the reservoir as a cultural and ecological treasure and have worked hard to make it more accessible by clearing trails, planting native plant species, and advocating for a pedestrian activated crosswalk signal. Recently, we have discovered bags of garbage illegal dumped around the reservoir. On one instance, one of our staff members interrupted two trucks that were starting to dump construction debris in the parking lot. To preserve the ecological integrity of the reservoir, we are asking for cameras equipped with license plate readers that will allow DSNY to identify people who are illegally dumping.

Thank you for your consideration of NYC H2O's testimony. We look forward to continuing to work with the Council Members, DSNY, and our community partner organizations to ensure New Yorkers have sustainably managed waste and garbage-free waterways.

Contact: Matt Malina, matt@nych2o.org

My name is Jackson Chabot, Director of Public Space Advocacy at Open Plans and I am testifying from Brooklyn. I'm here today to testify in support of the five pieces of legislation being heard at today's committee hearing. The Zero Waste package, led by Council Members Hanif, Powers, and Nurse are essential to our City meeting our goal of Zero Waste by 2030. This package will also make strides toward a livable city that is safe and clean.

Every year, our City generates 3.2 million tons of trash, the most of any City in the United States. The vast majority of this waste is sent to landfills up and down the East Coast where it sits and rots. Many of these landfills are located near communities of color and have for decades caused chronic health problems in those communities. Furthermore, a third of that waste is organic material that when it decomposes releases methane, a greenhouse gas that is more than 25 times more destructive than Carbon Dioxide. By passing the Zero Waste package in front of the committee today, our City can take real and meaningful steps to reduce our carbon footprint and get our City on track to send zero waste to landfills by 2030. Reducing our waste, and containzering it in the curb like Barcelona, San Juan and other cities do should be normal here. Trash bags on the sidewalk is good for rats, horrible for pedestrians.

With mandatory residential composting and the CORE act, we can ensure that New Yorkers have every opportunity to effectively dispose of their organic waste. Composting will not just reduce greenhouse gases, it creates an amazing byproduct that strengthens our soil and helps farmers across our state. An expanded composting program will also create thousands of good paying green union jobs for our City!

Additionally, the Zero Waste mandating and reporting legislation will provide concrete goals and benchmarks for our City to meet in our journey to Zero Waste. With just eight years until 2030, we need strong Council oversight to ensure our City is taking action to reduce our waste footprint.

Thank you for letting me testify before this committee. Climate change is a very real threat that demands immediate action from every level of government in every place across the globe. I urge this committee to pass this Zero Waste package.

Rethink Food

**The New York City Council
FY23 Hearing – Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management
Wednesday June 15th, 2022 12 P.M.**

TO: The Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management

FROM: Kathleen DiPerna, Rethink Food NYC, Inc.

DATE: Wednesday June 15th, 2022 at 12 PM

Chairperson Nurse and Sanitation Committee Members,

My name is Kathleen DiPerna, and I am the Director of Government Relations at Rethink, a New York City-based nonprofit with the mission to create a more sustainable and equitable food system - one where every New Yorker has access to dignified, culturally responsive and nutritious food.

We testify in support of two pieces of legislation introduced to the NYC Council (Int. 0274-2022 and 0275-2022) that will not only help build a more sustainable, zero waste New York City, but tangentially will also address intersectional issues that our City faces in regards to addressing these goals, like hunger, nutrition and access to healthy food. Additionally, we seek support for our citywide funding request through A Greener NYC, which is in support of our efforts as an organization to recover more excess food from the supply chain and transform it into new meals for New Yorkers that struggle to access food. We operate in 35 council districts across all 5 boroughs and have plans to expand to 40 council districts by Fiscal Year 2023. Support and partnership with the Council will be critical to ensuring that Rethink can continue to operate its programs to support the lives of our fellow New Yorkers, and build a cleaner, greener city.

Rethink was founded in 2017, operating the Rethink Commissary kitchen by transforming excess food from restaurants, corporate kitchens, and grocery stores into meals delivered to CBOs – a model that concurrently tackles food waste and food insecurity. Today the kitchen prepares an average 7-8,000 meals per week and distributes to 8 CBOs in Queens, Brooklyn and Manhattan.

Our work has evolved to include another innovative solution to address food insecurity – the Rethink Certified restaurant program. Launched at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, with food insecurity escalating and restaurants facing widespread closures, Rethink leveraged its experience to partner with restaurants to prepare meals for the community. In exchange, we provide grants to support food, operating, and staffing costs. We had a unique opportunity to distribute meals to vulnerable communities, and help restaurants stay open and retain staff. **In 2021, Rethink and its partners delivered nearly 3.3M meals to 88 CBOs, invested \$15.7M into 76 restaurants (75% of which were minority and or women owned) and recovered nearly 500,000 pounds of excess food. In 2022, Rethink plans to recover an additional 600,000 pounds of food from the waste stream.**

Rethink's services are greatly needed now more than ever across the city because nearly 1 out of every 4 New Yorkers is experiencing food insecurity, and due to the COVID-19 pandemic the existence of up to 50% of NYC restaurants are endangered. Additionally,

Rethink Food

New York City sends nearly 4 million tons of waste to landfill every year with almost one third of that being food waste. We need innovative solutions like Rethink to help the City tackle its food waste problem and achieve a zero waste city by 2030.

We cannot let our neighbors continue to wonder where their next meal will come from, allow restaurants to close when they are a viable conduit for feeding their community, all while perfectly edible food is continuing to be wasted.

Thank you for reading our testimony, and we look forward to continuing the conversation on how in partnership, we can make New Yorker City a zero waste city.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen DiPerna

Good afternoon; thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Ryan Castalia. I'm the Executive Director of Sure We Can, New York's only nonprofit serving canners, the folks who collect and redeem bottles and cans to earn income. I'm here to applaud Chair Nurse and the co-sponsors of this Council's Zero Waste legislation package for their commitment to building a more sustainable New York City. I credit them for their commitment to accountability, for recognizing that goals are empty unless they're tracked and meaningfully pursued. Above all, I'd like to commend their acknowledgement, through the proposed CORE Act, that for our communities to be truly sustainable, issues of accessibility, inclusivity, and environmental justice must be brought to the fore.

The malign specters of power, control, and injustice haunt our waste systems, just as they do our educational systems, our policing, and our infrastructure. Those who profit from consumption culture, and who stand to be burned by the light of accountability for the monstrous blight of waste in our society, are deeply invested in maintaining a system that is obscure and exclusive, both out of sight and out of mind. Massive swaths of Brooklyn, Queens, and the Bronx are designated as Environmental Justice Zones, underserved and overburdened with waste. This package of bills takes tremendous strides in ensuring that not only will essential services like composting and capture of hard-to-recycle materials exist, but the mechanisms will be in place to ensure that those services are genuinely accessible to the people who need them. In order for us to achieve real sustainability as a society, it's critical that the culture of sustainable practice actually *reaches* people, especially those who have been historically excluded.

Hopefully, these bills are just the beginning. The waste crisis is a huge and unavoidable issue, an all-hands-on-deck situation. Every solution needs to be considered, and every person or group that wants to contribute should have a pathway to do so. Container-deposit redemption, the work that our canners do, has tremendous benefits in terms of recycling outcomes and economic empowerment. Each year, our redemption center diverts around 500 tons of waste and distributes around \$700,000 into our community of around 1000 canners, just a fraction of the estimated 10,000 canners working across NYC. That community is overwhelmingly made up of severely underserved demographics, including new immigrants, non-English speakers, undocumented folks, people experiencing disabilities, and the elderly. Canning is environmental justice in action. This work costs the city nothing, yet we struggle for recognition and support, as redemption centers are priced out of neighborhood after neighborhood, even entire boroughs. We may see changes soon at the state level including the raising of the bottle deposit. That will be amazing—but it won't bring the holistic change we need unless it's backed up with infrastructure, accessibility, education, and, critically for any system like this, community input. Whether it's bottles and cans or organics, the city should be placing trust in communities and the groups that live and work with them to guide the way forward.

I am so grateful to the Council for recognizing these issues and stepping up to tackle them. To those elected leaders swimming upstream against the forces of the status quo, again, thank you for your courage. I hope we're just getting started.

SANITATION COMMITTEE TESTIMONY June 15, 2022

Hello and thank you, Chair Nurse and to the committee for this opportunity for all of us to speak.

I am Rhonda Keyser. I am the Legislative Committee Chair of the Brooklyn Solid Waste Advisory board. My comments today are my personal comments.

I am testifying in support of this exciting legislative package. I am incredibly proud to call Shahana Hanif my councilwoman. Thank you and the whole committee for your intelligent and insightful comments and questions at the top of this hearing. I am delighted to see what comes from this talented group of legislators.

As an Executive Board member of Sure We Can, NYC's only non-profit bottle and can redemption center, I am proud to support the important work that our community of canners do every day, cleaning our streets and harvesting resources at no expense to the City – diverting around 500 tons of waste in an inclusive and low-barrier method of resource diversion. The 70% return rate of bottles and cans reveals the effectiveness of the bottle law compared to the less than 15% diversion rate of other single-use containers. Again, this resource recovery rate is achieved at NO COST TO THE CITY.

I am also Education Director with Cafeteria Culture. I want to echo and underscore Debby Lee Cohen's comments about Plastic Free Lunch Day. The success of NYC's May 16 Plastic Free Lunch Day cannot be denied: through our pilot, the Department of Education reduced the number of plastic items from school lunch by 72%, or 362 items – that's more than 2 pieces of plastic per meal. That would be a reduction of 360 million pieces of plastic per year in NYC. At Cafeteria Culture, we teach our students that good data drives policy and boy did they collect good data! Our students and the decision-makers they talked with learned through leading this pilot that eliminating plastic is totally possible!



Cafeteria Culture students at PS/MS 34
collecting data on Plastic Free Lunch Day, May 16, 2022

Emboldened by their large systemic plastic reduction success, our students reviewed the single-use plastic that came into cafeterias from HOME LUNCH and put on their problem-solving hats. They concluded that: simply asking families or delis and stores is not the most efficient or meaningful way to curb single-use plastic. Even talking directly to all of the creators of the single-use plastic pollution proved to be an impossible task.

Our students were delighted to learn about New York State Assemblymember Englebright's Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) bill A10185 and his Bigger Better Bottle bill, A10184/S9146. They believe that his bills are picking up where they are leaving off for the summer!



I hope that the NY City Council will recognize and endorse A10185 and A10184/S9146 going forward!

Finally, regarding containerization, I want to say that NYC has already invested in the most effective containers for repelling pests and vermin: brown bins that should contain our organic waste. At Cafeteria Culture, we teach our students that there is no “away” with respect to our garbage. Investing more money in hiding sidewalk garbage “away” in containers and only masks the need to REDUCE our garbage footprint. The more quickly we can focus our energy and budget on reducing and diverting our waste from the waste stream **at the source**, with reduction and reuse laws like EPR and the Bigger Better Bottle Bill, the sooner we will address our plastic pollution crisis with equitable solutions.

Thank you,

Rhonda Keyser
District 39
Carroll Gardens, Brooklyn

June 15, 2022

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to you on behalf of Uptown Progressive Action to urge you to make organic waste curbside collection mandatory across the City of New York. This would generate immense ecological, economic and social gains for all New Yorkers and City Government.

Ecological and Sanitation Benefits

Organic waste is rich in nutrients and can be used to enrich the soil in parks, community gardens, and street trees. Compost also enhances the soil's ability to retain water, making it an especially valuable tool for flood mitigation. One third of NYC's waste stream is composed of organic waste. Most ends up in landfill, which emits methane, a greenhouse gas 80 times more potent than CO₂ over a 20-year period. Lastly, containerizing organic waste, rather than combining it with other waste in plastic trash bags, will virtually eliminate the city's rat problem.

Economic Benefits

The city would save money diverting up to a third of all garbage truck tonnage away from landfills or incinerators. Currently, it spends \$460 million dollars a year exporting its waste to out-of-state landfills and incinerators. Organic composting facilities create good green jobs, twice as many as landfill operations and four times more than incinerators per ton of trash. Let us not forget the economic savings that would be derived from mitigating the aforementioned rat problem. In a similar vein, landlords, co-op boards and homeowners would have less expenditure on pest control (separating trash from organic waste reduces the number of rats, mice, and insects). Finally, the city infrastructure would allow for dairy and meat products to be composted which would significantly expand the amount of organic waste being composted relative to the capacity of the drop-off sites we currently have.

Social Justice Benefits

Landfills are generally located in low-income communities and communities of color, who suffer from a range of serious health issues because of exposure to environmental toxins. Diverting organic waste from landfill and incinerators also means less waste is trucked to the City's waste transfer stations, located in environmental justice communities, where residents are subjected to unhealthy levels of air and noise pollution.

Not only has the back-and-forth on this issue been consuming the government's resources, but even more importantly, the city can now capitalize on the tremendous number of resources it has invested over the past several years to successfully build momentum and motivation for composting. Please help New York City catch up to so many other cities around the world who have had mandatory curbside composting for many years. It is a clear win-win for all communities and strongly supported by the people you are serving as elected officials. This was demonstrated after the curbside composting collection was suspended due to COVID budget cuts. Jessica, a fellow neighborhood resident stated on Next Door: "My building actually told us to continue putting food waste in the compost bins because separating it has made it smell less in our basement area and is better for our staff who manage the garbage..." (5/4/2020). A *Politico* article published

on May 4, 2020, features a quote from J. Ottman, who sits on the co-op board for her Upper East Side building and on the Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board: “Once people do have it and see how much food they actually collect and get into the habit and realize there’s not a lot of flies and smell ... they’re committed to it.” Put together, these statements also show how composting quickly wins people’s hearts and minds, even if they are unfamiliar with it at first.

There is an overwhelming desire for mandatory curbside composting among New Yorkers who reside Uptown and else in Manhattan as well as the five boroughs. Those who are renters especially need this to become law because they are at the mercy of their landlords’ will to provide a brown bin; unfortunately, most of them do not opt in. Mandatory organic waste curbside collection would be a boon for all stakeholders. Thank you for your deep and thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Steering Committee,
Uptown Progressive Action



Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management
Wednesday, June 15, 2022
Virtual Meeting
New York, New York 10007

Sanitation & Solid Waste Committee of NYC - Open Hearings

My name is Vandra Thorburn. I am the founder and president of Vokashi – New York’s original compost collection service. For many years I have testified at Sanitation Hearings about the need for DSNY to reallocate its “waste export dollars” toward the development of community-based composting and recycling initiatives. In the light of the draconian cuts anticipated to basic sanitation services, will there be cuts to the ‘waste-export dollars’?

However, today, I want to underscore the following issues:

1. Top of the food waste hierarchy is Prevention and Reduction. How do we get to Zero Organics Waste from say 41%? (the Residential Rate) or 46.8% (combined Food Service, Retail and Manufacturing rates¹?
2. **Both the residential and commercial infrastructure is designed to encourage more food waste not ‘less.’**
3. Particularly with the rush to find innovative processing alternatives – including anaerobic digestors at treatment plants – will require more organics to function not less. Defeats the purpose of “reducing”.
 - a. **Not to mention the problems Waste to Energy plants have that it is an add on to unsustainable fossil fuel - GAS**
4. **Establish and favor an independent organics collection industry – including small business collectors and micro haulers.**
 - a. Carting companies can have their own organics collection operations but separate and distinct from other Trash collections.
 - b. **To encourage food waste reduction, charge more for organics collection.**
 - c. How else are we going to reduce the amount of food waste going out for collection?
5. **Two tiered strategy to increase collection of residential organics in New York City:**

Tier 1. **Large buildings** (more than 10 units) should be required by DSNY to develop organics collection within the building. The landlords and property owners would be tasked with developing a collection plan which could include:

¹ [ReFED - Food waste monitor](#)

- ✓ Multiple brown bins serviced by DSNY;
- ✓ Installation of tax-incentivized dewatering machines or similar systems. The residues would be collected by DSNY for delivery to organics processing facilities; Subsidies would be cost justified as on-site dewatering would reduce the volume of organics carted by DSNY, meaning a cost saving that would be transferred to the landlord.
- ✓ Installation of in-sink disposal units such as Insinkerator

Tier 2. For residents in buildings with fewer than 10 units:

- ✓ **Multiple organics drop off sites both staffed and card-controlled** that can be staffed by nonprofit composting projects, then carted by either nonprofit composting projects, micro-haulers or DSNY vehicles to local composting facilities or City-operated organic processing facilities.
- ✓ Allow – encourage – households /small buildings to contract with micro haulers for a small payment to collect and process their food scraps.

6. Can we hope for implementing any of the micro hauling options in the 7 pilot zones?

- a. Allow for a small fee to the homeowners who can have this service rather than walk their food scraps to drop off sites.
- b. Demonstrate the value of 5 gallon pale which allows residents to monitor their food waste including how to reduce their food waste.

Respectfully submitted,
Vandra Thorburn

As a member of the Brooklyn Technical High School community, I support City Council Bills Int 0274-2022 and Int 0275-2022 for a cleaner and more sustainable New York. Yet one of the greatest obstacles to achieving zero waste to landfill for NYC by 2030 is the failure to recycle in NYC public schools. Using Brooklyn Technical High School as an example, I'd like to share a few recommendations that I believe will help NYC public schools meet the City Council's goal of zero waste to landfill for NYC by 2030. Should those recommendations meet with the City Council's approval, further legislative action will be required.

City Council Bill Int 0274-2022, Establishing a goal of zero waste for NYC by 2030, and Int 0275-2022, Goal of zero waste to landfill, both introduced by Sandy Nurse on April 28, 2022, co-sponsored by 36 other City Council members, in conjunction with Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso, would amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to establishing a goal of zero waste for New York City by 2030. Int 0274-2022 calls for DSNY to divert 100 percent of citywide-generated waste from landfills by 2030. Furthermore, Int 0275-2022 calls for DSNY to establish a plan "to increase diversion, which shall include, but not be limited to strategies to increase diversion for each material, strategies to increase compliance with existing law and a description of all education and outreach programs available to the public and strategies to increase or update such education and outreach programs."

The Sustainability Council of Brooklyn Technical High School in partnership with GrowNYC and Zero Waste Schools has identified several action items, which, if implemented, would assist DSNY to increase diversion up to 100 percent of citywide-generated waste from landfills potentially even sooner than 2030. Brooklyn Tech is the largest public high school in New York City, and the largest specialized high school in the country, serving approximately 6,000 students; we are the size of

a small city in the heart of Brooklyn, so the impact we have on our community is massive. As a result, we are very well positioned due to our size, mission, and location to become a model of effective recycling and zero waste to landfill. And yet, although we generate tons of trash every day, **we do not recycle metal, glass, plastic, or organics.** There are several reasons why Brooklyn Tech fails to recycle despite the best efforts of a phalanx of environmental clubs, the commitment of our Environmental Science students and faculty, the advocacy of the Sustainability Council and student government, and the good intentions of the Principal: 1) there is a leadership vacuum at the highest echelons of the NYC DOE, and thus no active commitment to sustainability; 2) the organizational structure at the school site level is dysfunctional; and 3) custodians lack the proper equipment to efficiently collect trash and recyclables separately.

According to the current NYC Department of Education Organizational Chart, the Deputy Chancellor of Operations is responsible for Facilities and School Food, among other duties. However, as of June 2022, that position is still pending appointment. The first action item, therefore, is to demand that the Schools Chancellor fills the leadership vacuum for Operations and thus ensures that Brooklyn Tech and other NYC public schools come into compliance with existing Local Law 19 (1989), Local Law 41 (2010), DSNY Recycling Rules, and the NYC Department of Education Chancellor's Regulation A-850 (2013), as well as Local Law 77 (2013), which mandates Organics Collection in participating schools such as Brooklyn Tech. NYC schools are among the most egregious polluters. According to Zero Waste Schools, "New York City schools generate more than 40,000 tons of refuse per year," nearly all of which is not recycled, composted, or reused. **1)** If zero waste for NYC is a City Council priority, for it to become a reality by 2030 the City Council must demand that Schools Chancellor David C. Banks hires a strong candidate for the position of Deputy Chancellor of Operations, someone with a proven track record and avowed commitment to *Sustainability*, notwithstanding the Chancellor's pledge to streamline his cabinet and cut bureaucracy.

Next, at the school site level, the primary responsibility of the school Custodial Engineer, as per NYC DOE's InfoHub, is "to ensure that the school building is ready for occupancy on a daily basis." Custodial Engineers report to, and are rated by, school Principals. Thus, the Principal and the Custodial Engineer are expected to "meet on a daily basis to discuss building issues & set schedule to tour building together to ensure cleaning & maintenance standards are met." Nicholas DelBianco, Deputy Director of Facilities for Districts 13, 15-16, where Brooklyn Tech is located, "performs managerial oversight at a district level of day-to-day custodial operations," while it is one of the administrative tasks of the school Principal to "escalate facilities issues or concerns to the Custodial Engineer and the assigned Deputy Director of Facilities." The Division of School Facilities, in turn, "conducts periodic, non-technical, visual inspections of NYC school buildings." Moreover, "scores are assigned to each condition to determine target areas that require special attention and corrective action." Among the 'target areas' that may require 'corrective action' is *Sustainability*. InfoHub clearly states that the Division of School Facilities, under the direction of Carmine Franzese, Interim Director of Facilities for Brooklyn North (District 13-16, etc.); in consultation with Nicholas DelBianco, Deputy Director of Facilities; together with the school Principal; and the school Custodial Engineer are collectively responsible for guaranteeing "integration of sustainability in operations, facilities & education at all DOE schools in accordance with Chancellor's Regulation A-850 & goals (Carbon neutrality by 2050, Zero waste by 2030." In addition, the above-named leadership team is responsible for providing a "variety of programs, trainings, workshops, events & professional learning opportunities for school stakeholders, teachers, Sustainability coordinators, students, administrators, Office of Food & Nutrition Services (OFNS) staff & custodial staff." Notwithstanding all the efforts of DOE leadership, the reality at Brooklyn Tech and countless other NYC public schools is that **recycling efforts are fragmentary, piecemeal, and ineffective at best and are not coordinated with the City Council's goals or the DOE's own stated goal of zero waste by 2030.** At the

building site level, the current organizational structure, which stipulates that the Custodial Engineer reports to, and is rated by, the Principal, fails to provide adequate oversight of the Custodial Engineer and the custodial staff as regards *Sustainability*. Instead of promoting cooperation, the current structure foments rivalry to the detriment of the school community and its educational project. Although the Custodial Engineer works under a performance-based contract, the school Principal, at his discretion, may not always take *Sustainability* into account when awarding a satisfactory rating, in an effort to maintain a cordial work environment. Hence, facilities issues that specifically concern *Sustainability* often do not get escalated to the assigned Deputy Director of Facilities after being disregarded by the Custodial Engineer. **2)** To remediate organizational dysfunction that obstructs the goal of zero waste for NYC by 2030, the City Council should draft legislation that revises sections of the Org Chart of NYC DOE. The Custodial Engineer and the Principal are each responsible for the daily functioning of different facets of an entire school building; hence, they are effectively peers and should not be in the position to officially rate each other. A more sound performance review structure would charge the Deputy Director of Facilities, or his/her/their designee, with rating the Custodial Engineer, in addition to providing oversight. Such a move would free the school Principal from having to play an untenable role. In fact, it would free the Principal to be more forthright about the *Sustainability* concerns of the school with the Deputy Director of Facilities, the Custodial Engineer's new direct supervisor. Furthermore, the Custodial Engineer, who is a major stakeholder, should be required by the Deputy Director of Facilities to become a member of the School Leadership Team (SLT), regularly attend meetings, and play an active role in the educational mission of each school, alongside the Sustainability Coordinator. Currently, the Custodial Engineer is not involved in the academic and social life of the school, which makes him/her/them indifferent to the commitment to *Sustainability* of students, faculty, staff, and parents.

Finally, as things stand, the Custodial Engineer and his staff lack the equipment they need to

sort the contents of blue, green, and brown recycle bins, as well as trash bins, in a time-efficient manner. As a result, the custodians who clean classrooms and the cafeteria at the end of each day mix together recyclables and trash into one bin. Consequently, Brooklyn Tech students, who are keenly aware that the school does not recycle, lose their incentive to properly sort paper, metal/glass/plastic, organics, and trash in the school. The Custodial Engineer's response has been to say that once recyclables are "contaminated," they must be thrown out with the trash. Thus, a cynical, vicious cycle is born that exponentially decreases the likelihood that NYC can meet its goal of zero waste by 2030. The impact is felt globally and at the community level: one sanitation truck is assigned to the residential block where Brooklyn Tech is located; once the truck is 40 percent full, sanitation workers leave the rest of the trash on the curb, which results in a righteous outcry from our neighbors, as well as fines levied by DSNY. No limit exists, however, regarding how much recyclable material the recycling truck will take. If our school would recycle paper, metal/glass/plastic, and organics, we could eliminate the presence of piles of contaminated trash bags on the curb, as well as our neighbors' ire, and make a substantive contribution toward zero waste for NYC by 2030. **3)** To ensure that City Council Bills Int 2074-2022 and Int 2075-2022, once passed into law, have a realistic chance of successfully meeting their 2030 target for zero waste, the City Council should legislate that the Custodial Engineer of each school must furthermore make expenditures from MyGalaxy for Triple-Capacity Recycling Carts for his staff and additional recycling bins for classrooms and hallways; moreover, the Custodial Engineer and the school Principal should collaboratively promote a high-visibility education campaign to ensure that all staff, students, and faculty know how to recycle properly.

Such a campaign, currently led by the Sustainability Council, Zero Waste in Schools, and the Sustainability coordinator at Brooklyn Tech is already in full swing. The objective is to educate all stakeholders (custodians, staff, students, parents, and faculty) in how to recycle paper, metal/glass/plastic, and organics (especially in the cafeteria) and to provide the custodial staff with

the necessary equipment to comply with NYC DOE's *Sustainability* requirements, transform school culture, and restore our community's belief that recycling is not only possible but essential, and that Brooklyn Tech, like countless other NYC public schools, can positively contribute to the City Council's goal of zero waste for NYC by 2030.

From: alex cuff <burgissima@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, June 18, 2022 12:56 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL]

My name is Alex Cuff and I live in Flatbush.

I'm writing today to testify in support of the five pieces of legislation heard at the June 15th committee hearing. The Zero Waste package, led by Council Members **Hanif, Powers, and Nurse** are essential to our City meeting our goal of Zero Waste by 2030.

With mandatory residential composting and the CORE act, we can ensure that New Yorkers have every opportunity to effectively dispose of their organic waste. Composting will not just reduce greenhouse gases, it creates an amazing byproduct that strengthens our soil and helps farmers across our state. An expanded composting program will also create thousands of good paying green union jobs for our City!

Additionally, the Zero Waste mandating and reporting legislation will provide concrete goals and benchmarks for our City to meet in our journey to Zero Waste. With just eight years until 2030, we need strong Council oversight to ensure our City is taking action to reduce our waste footprint.

Thank you for letting me testify before this committee. Climate change is a very real threat that demands immediate action from every level of government in every place across the globe. I urge this committee to pass this Zero Waste package.

Please please please!
thanks,
alex

--
alex cuff
she/her/hers
www.alex cuff.com

June 15, 2022

Dear New York City Council:

My name is Alexis Audette and I live in a 20 unit apartment building in Hell's Kitchen. Prior to the pandemic our building had curbside compost pickup. At the start of the program, fellow co-op board members and I invited DSNY to come our building to give informational meeting on how the curbside pick up program worked. They gave an excellent presentation, delivered the large brown waste receptacle, and distributed little plastic composting buckets to each resident. The meeting was very well-attended- there was real enthusiasm in our building for the initiative- and, for a short time, we successfully composted our organic waste.

When the pandemic began we were crushed that the program was put on hold. It never occurred to us that NYC wouldn't eventually reinstate the program. There are so many good reasons to do so, from fighting climate change to reducing the rat population to building community. Composting is a simple way that every household can contribute to the well-being of our city.

We ask you to bring back the curbside compost program. We have the energy and desire, not to mention the buckets, to jump back into the program and make it successful. Please reinstate the program for our city and for our future.

Thank you and best regards,

Alexis Audette

To: My Honorable Councilmember Shahana Hanif, Committee Chair Sandy Nurse and all Esteemed Members of the Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management

Re: Universal City Compost Bill Intro244

My name is Amy Plattsmier, and I appreciate the opportunity to submit my testimony to this committee today. Just a few months ago, on March 4, I submitted a plea to this committee to save curbside compost collection after Mayor Adams not only reversed his campaign promise to expand the program but canceled it altogether. Mr. Adams had claimed universal composting was a key tenet of his climate agenda, yet now he was calling curbside composting “symbolic.” Curbside organic waste collection was the culmination of decades of work by climate and education experts and activists to connect the dots between hunger, global warming, environmental and economic disparity, and health. After so many years of work we were finally reaching a tipping point where waste separation and mindfulness were becoming a part of our citizens’ daily habits. When compost collection stopped, the work of changing “hearts and minds” just disappeared. And the infrastructure of organic waste processing sites was equally devastated when compost workers were laid off and left in the lurch. While it’s a relief that a few community board districts are routed for curbside collection again, I believe the piecemeal reintroduction of the program is actually undermining its credibility. Not only is this incremental approach a nightmare to explain to the public, but it also smells like environmental discrimination; my neighborhood of Kensington has a lot of immigrant families whose first languages are not English. Asking people to have to opt in to a program online and not getting the word out in ways that are accessible to all New Yorkers seems to me intentional - a way to cut the program and claim community “disinterest.” This is why we MUST pass Intro244 and put into place universal mandatory organics collection.

When I wrote to this committee in March, I was just a passionate home composter who had also dedicated many hours for over a decade to composting education in my communities. The first Participatory Budgeting project I ever worked on was a 2011 winner for an industrial shredder to be managed by the Gowanus Canal Conservancy’s composting program. I come to you today having just completed the Dept. of Sanitation’s Master Composter course. The value of the course is not just learning about soil health and decomposition science; rather, communing and networking with composters from all 5 boroughs has taught me just as much as the manual. I’ve visited and worked in compost processing sites and with experts at Snug Harbor in Staten Island, Governors Island, Red Hook Farm, the Gowanus Salt Lot, the Lower East Side Ecology lot in Rockaway, Brooklyn, Queens Botanical Garden, Brooklyn Botanic Garden, and Queensbridge. I’ve knocked on hundreds of doors in Sunset Park and Windsor Terrace to get out the word about curbside collection and sign people up, and I’ve spent many hours behind Compost Project education tables to help people figure out the crazy quilt of food scrap waste disposal in this city. This experience doesn’t make me an expert, but it has given me perspective. On my little corner of Brooklyn alone, there is a food scrap dropoff bin available for neighbors two days a week for 4 hours; yet, because the pickup is managed by different entities, they don’t know about each other, and aren’t featured on the same map. Our city’s dedicated citizen composters, their community gardens, and the nonprofits who partner with the

Department are doing incredible work. They desperately need a citywide organics disposal mandate that will simplify the process for the public, fund community efforts, and reach a broader band of New Yorkers where they are, at home. More collection obviously means more processing, and to the naysayers I am here to attest that the opportunities for organics processing expansion are numerous. The space and the worker base are there. This is an opportunity to train young people for thousands of climate forward, healthy, outdoor jobs.

For those who might hear this testimony and think – it is too much work to separate my food waste from the rest of my trash, please hear this: our taxes pay for all of our garbage to go to landfills outside the city. This is increasingly expensive. If over one-third of that waste could stay and be returned to the soil, you will personally reap the benefits in the following ways: less money for transportation of garbage, fewer pests who love ripping open garbage bags full of food, cleaner air resulting from less waste in landfills (which release harmful methane), and less flooding (compost rich soil holds more water, so there's less runoff into the sewer system).

I recognize budgetary concerns, but we cannot afford to reverse progress on the larger, no longer future, crisis: climate change. Organic waste diversion and composting are a vital part of the city's "Zero Waste" initiative, which calls for cutting waste sent to landfills by 90 percent by 2030. We will not meet this goal without making it mandatory and universal, plain and simple.

Convincing folks to change their habits and their mindset around waste requires patience and time, but the faster we reinstate and expand curbside compost collection the quicker the public will learn the value of vital organic waste diversion and become invested in healing their planet. Please don't flush down the already overloaded combined sewer overflow the hard work of volunteers and educators and the personal investment into composting that the citizens of New York have already made. In this time of great uncertainty, we need programs that contribute to a more sustainable future. Universal composting can give people hope that, through collective action, our individual choices can make a difference. We need this kind of hope.

Sincerely,

Amy Plattsmier
Chester Avenue, Brooklyn 11218

TESTIMONY OF ANDREA SCARBOROUGH

###-## 179TH STREET ADDISLEIGH PARK NY 11434

HEARING ON ZERO WASTE LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE

Good-morning Chairperson Nurse and committee members. My name is Andrea Scarborough, I am the Vice Chair of the Queens Solid Waste Advisory Board, however today I come before you as a concerned resident of Southeast Queens.

I support the Zero Waste Package of Intro 244, Intro 275, Intro 274, Intro 280 and Intro 281 as this package of bills moves New York City forward towards the Department of Sanitation achieving its' goal of zero waste by 2030.

The package of legislation aims to create a citywide curbside organics program for residential buildings. It also mandates that DSNY report on the City's progress towards sending zero waste to landfills by 2030 and charge DSNY to establish and operate a recycling center and organics drop off sites in each community district.

As a resident of Southeast Queens, Community Board 12, my community was never included in the curbside organics collection program which was later suspended in May 2020. Our community was never given the opportunity to participate nor were the residents of CB 12 asked if they wanted to participate in the program. While an abundance of food scraps drop-off sites exists in some districts in my community, they are minimal to non-existent. I have to go outside of my immediate area to drop off my organics. I welcome a DSNY operated community recycle center in Community Board 12 and I further recommend that the hours of operation be convenient for residents and include weekends, early morning and evenings availability to drop off organics, e-waste, textiles and hazardous materials. This will increase community participation.

As waste diversion programs are rolled out and community centers as well as organics drop off sites are established, a robust marketing and educational program must be put in place. The program must engage the public and show them the health and environmental benefits of waste diversion in order to change behavior. The outreach and educational materials should go beyond posting of materials on DSNY website, or on social media networks and include outreach to:

- Community Boards

- Presentations at Civic Association meetings
- Participation in community forums, tabling at community events and sharing information with church organizations

Community engagement must be at the grass roots level to ensure maximum participation by residents and a successful program.

Lastly while it is important that DSNY report to the Mayor and the City Council on diversion rates of recyclable material (by material and community district) collected at curbside, the data should be transparent and made available also to the community boards as well as the public at large. This will serve as a means to engage the public to strive to achieve our zero waste goals.

Thank you for the opportunity today to present my comments.

Andrea Scarborough

Concerned Resident

Member – Addisleigh Park Civic Organization

Member – Queens Solid Waste Advisory Board

Good Afternoon. My name is Anita Chan and I am testifying in support of this legislative package. I have lived in NYC all my life and although there have been great improvements in many aspects, the pace doesn't match the urgency of tackling the climate crisis and improving the quality of life for all. I believe these bills will help pave the road to more solid impactful action.

We need universal mandatory residential composting. The current system with some neighborhoods having curbside collection and others having food scrap drop off sites, many of which have set hours, is not equitable enough. Many neighborhoods are undeserved and even if there is a food scrap drop off around the corner, the feasibility of a household of 2 dropping off food scraps versus a household of 6 is very different. It should not be so easy to throw things into trash. Instead of having 2 trash days, one day should be for organics. Education, enforcement, and convenience is key. DSNY already allows plastic bags to be used, another idea can be make browns more widely accessible to residents to manage odors. In addition, all of the organics collected should not be trucked far but instead, processed locally where compost is given back to the community to use in public spaces and private. This can't be delayed, having a voluntary program lacks the urgency needed.

Ensuring that every community district gets three food waste drop off sites and three recycling centers allows more people to participate no matter what neighborhood they live in. I want to know how the capacity of these sites and the exact locations will be determined since different neighborhoods with different population densities may call for varying levels of services. I also think that food scrap drop offs should be located next to the recycling site so that it can be "one stop" instead of people having to seek out two locations. This will complement the residential curbside program, capturing organic waste eaten on the go, at workplaces, and recreation areas, etc.

Lastly, we absolutely need to have clearly defined zero waste goals and actually work towards them. We need to ensure we are setting goals and taking action upstream and downstream. Skip the Stuff bill, Extended Producer Responsibility Bill, and setting up infrastructure for reusables, composting, are all crucial aspects to making a zero waste future possible.

Passing these bills and pushing for real effective change is instrumental in

- Creating local green jobs
- Turning organic waste, a valuable resource into compost to help enrich our soils
- Diverting waste from landfill and incineration to cut down on greenhouse gas emissions from transportation, burning, and from being in the landfill
- Saving the city money from sending heavy bulky waste to landfill

- Helping mitigate the city's rat problem
- Guaranteeing a livable and thriving city

From: Ann Simkins <annsimkins@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 16, 2022 4:00 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter in support of the Zero Waste Package

My name is Ann Simkins and I am testifying from south Brooklyn. I'm writing today to testify in support of the five pieces of legislation heard at the June 15th committee hearing. The Zero Waste package, led by Council Members Hanif, Powers, and Nurse are essential to our City meeting our goal of Zero Waste by 2030.

Every year, our City generates 3.2 million tons of trash, the most of any City in the United States. The vast majority of this waste is sent to landfills up and down the East Coast where it sits and rots. Many of these landfills are located near communities of color and have for decades caused chronic health problems in those communities. Furthermore, a third of that waste is organic material that when it decomposes releases methane, a greenhouse gas that is more than 25 times more destructive than Carbon Dioxide. By passing the Zero Waste package in front of the committee today, our City can take real and meaningful steps to reduce our carbon footprint and get our City on track to send zero waste to landfills by 2030.

With mandatory residential composting and the CORE act, we can ensure that New Yorkers have every opportunity to effectively dispose of their organic waste. Composting will not just reduce greenhouse gases, it creates an amazing byproduct that strengthens our soil and helps farmers across our state. An expanded composting program will also create thousands of good paying green union jobs for our City!

Additionally, the Zero Waste mandating and reporting legislation will provide concrete goals and benchmarks for our City to meet in our journey to Zero Waste. With just eight years until 2030, we need strong Council oversight to ensure our City is taking action to reduce our waste footprint.

Thank you for letting me testify before this committee. Climate change is a very real threat that demands immediate action from every level of government in every place across the globe. I urge this committee to pass this Zero Waste package.

My name is Anna Buning and I am joining from Manhattan. I'm here to testify in support of the whole package of bills being heard at today's committee hearing, but I'm going to focus my testimony on the Universal Composting bill.

I am a German immigrant, a wife and a mother of two small children, Oliver age 3 and Noella age 1. Even before they entered my life, I enjoyed cooking at home, but now with the little ones it seems I am serving up meals all day long. If you've ever been a parent to young children, you know that your food waste explodes once you're feeding picky eaters. I often make a very healthy dinner, and then a toddler acceptable dinner after the healthy one was refused. And then, two hours later, a dinner more appropriate for adult palates. Our dog gets lucky sometimes, but overall, we still generate an incredible amount of food waste and food scraps.

We currently keep about 1/3 of our freezer space reserved for our compost and once a week I find time in my hectic schedule – I forgot to mention I also work full time as a CFO at a startup – and bring about 40 lbs of compost to our local bin that's part of the downtown public compost pilot program in Fidi. The logistics of this certainly takes away time that I don't really have... but composting, and climate change at large is an issue our family cares a lot about. Its an issue we all should care a lot about.

Humans have been composting since the beginning of time- something like 5000 or 2350 BC. We don't have to create or wait for some new technology to help us combat climate change. Other cities, like Seoul, San Francisco, Munich (my hometown) and Minnapolis are already doing this successfully. We know composting reduces greenhouse gases and creates amazing byproducts.

By passing the Zero Waste package in front of the committee today, our City can take real and meaningful steps to reduce our carbon footprint and get our City on track to send zero waste to landfills by 2030. Oliver will be in 5th grade then and Noe will be 10 years old. It's hard to that imagine now, but be we only have 8 short years left to Zero Waste.

Thank you for letting me testify before this committee. Climate change is a very real threat that demands immediate action from every level of government in every place across the globe. I urge this committee to pass this Zero Waste package.

June 15 Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management 12 PM 2022

RE: Int: 0244 2022 RESIDENTIAL CURBSIDE ORGANICS COLLECTION Shahana K Hanif Sponsor

I am in favor of all residential buildings having the brown bins so they can properly sort and dispose of organic waste. The amount that is dropped off at the Lower East Side Ecology Center at Tompkins Square Park on only one day a week, Sunday, is unbelievable. The bins are huge and I counted approximately 10 already full, early in the afternoon. It must be that people have no other way to process their organic waste.

RE: Int: 0280-2022 COMMUNITY RECYCLING CENTERS Keith Powers Sponsor

I am in favor of each district having a recycling center. Every clothing collection I have passed recently is over-flowing with our neighborhood's cast off clothing and fabric. Fabric should be separately processed, and considered a resource to be re purposed, even if it is only as rags.

Every electronics event I have attended has long lines of people with outdated, or outgrown electronics. These items need to be kept out of the landfill as they contains toxic metals, and paint.

RE: Int: 0281-2022 Organic Waste Drop Off Sites

I am strongly in favor of these drop – off sites. Not every landlord of smaller buildings is able or willing to set up the brown bin system. If a tenant can locate a spot to go to once a week, this solves the problem and keeps organic waste out of that buildings waste stream. Less mess, less odors, less rodents, less waste. I'm aware that it's harder for smaller buildings to coordinate the brown bins, and get them rolled out on the pick up days, so these drop-off sites are essential.

Please, Please consider a bill to require the Department of Sanitation to initiate COMMERCIAL food waste collection systems for RESTAURANTS, especially in the lower east side. The lower east side has become a very popular location for restaurants and there is NO system for extra food waste to be processed. Food is tossed into plastic bags along with everything else being thrown out by the restaurant. Rats have NO problem getting into a plastic bag for the food inside.

Sincerely ,

Anne Dardis

Re: Intro 0244-2022 - Mandatory Composting

June 15, 2022

Dear Committee,

I was instrumental in establishing composting in my building at 315 W. 86th St. earlier this year. The idea was met with mixed acceptance, but we now have voluntary participation from many residents. As people learned to become accustomed to recycling papers, metals and plastics they will adapt to composting. New habits will form for the benefit of our community and planet.

Citizens need to be educated on the program. Aside from the benefits of keeping food waste out of landfills and letting it go back to the earth as nature intended, it also cuts down on the vermin problem. We all know that the rodent population in the city is out of control and this is probably one of the best selling points for people who have not yet tried composting. The benefits of composting are clear. There may be some upfront cost but after the program is set up and running fully the associated costs of waste management actually go down.

We have an obligation to work towards zero waste. And, even though we might never actually get there, composting is an excellent first step with lots of benefits and almost no downsides. I would urge you to pass this bill and make composting mandatory in New York City.

Regards,
Anthony Campbell

Ashlye Underwood
June 14, 2022

Testimony for City Council Hearing 6/15/22
Committee on Solid Waste Management

Dear City Council,

I am a new resident to this city, having moved here in 2021 and I am writing to you in support of the following bills:

- Residential curbside organics collection (Int 0244-2022)
- Establishing a goal of zero waste for NYC by 2030 (Int 0274-2022)
- Goal of zero waste to landfill (Int 0275-2022)
- Community recycling centers (Int 0280-2022)
- Organic waste drop-off sites (Int 0281-2022)

With regards to the bills increasing access for NYC residents to have their organics collected (0244 and 0281), I want to point out that composting is a net positive overall, for the city, New Yorkers, and of course our surrounding environment. Composting diverts huge amounts of waste from landfills, **decreasing the amount of the greenhouse gas methane** that is released into the air, and reducing cost to the city.

When it's finished and added to soil, compost increases the amount of water that can be held by soil, which is a huge benefit for places like NYC where we have so much hardscaping. In this way, **adding compost to our parks, tree pits, and community gardens can help mitigate the city's combined sewage overflow issues, because it will decrease the amount of water that goes into the sewer system during storms.** It can help protect New Yorkers' homes in situations where they might otherwise flood due to a storm surge. **I urge you to make composting as accessible as possible for New Yorkers; it will benefit everyone.**

I believe it is our responsibility as the greatest city in the world to lead the charge on climate change. We need to be accountable for the goals we set, and we need to do everything possible to meet them. We should be making it easy for New Yorkers to be active participants in these goals. One of the reasons I was excited to buy in Ridgewood was the curbside composting program, and it was a real disappointment to find that this was a cut during the pandemic. I sincerely hope it will be reinstated and fully supported.

Thank you for reading and considering my testimony, I hope you will take these issues seriously.

Sincerely,

Ashlye Underwood
16th St,
Brooklyn NY
11215

From: Caitlin Mulrooney-Lyski <caitlin.mulrooney@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 16, 2022 4:34 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] In Support of Universal Compost

My name is Caitlin Mulrooney-Lyski and I am testifying from south Brooklyn. I'm writing today to testify in support of the five pieces of legislation heard at the June 15th committee hearing. The Zero Waste package, led by Council Members Hanif, Powers, and Nurse are essential to our City meeting our goal of Zero Waste by 2030.

Every year, our City generates 3.2 million tons of trash, the most of any City in the United States. The vast majority of this waste is sent to landfills up and down the East Coast where it sits and rots. Many of these landfills are located near communities of color and have for decades caused chronic health problems in those communities. Furthermore, a third of that waste is organic material that when it decomposes releases methane, a greenhouse gas that is more than 25 times more destructive than Carbon Dioxide. By passing the Zero Waste package in front of the committee today, our City can take real and meaningful steps to reduce our carbon footprint and get our City on track to send zero waste to landfills by 2030.

With mandatory residential composting and the CORE act, we can ensure that New Yorkers have every opportunity to effectively dispose of their organic waste. Composting will not just reduce greenhouse gases, it creates an amazing byproduct that strengthens our soil and helps farmers across our state. An expanded composting program will also create thousands of good paying green union jobs for our City!

Additionally, the Zero Waste mandating and reporting legislation will provide concrete goals and benchmarks for our City to meet in our journey to Zero Waste. With just eight years until 2030, we need strong Council oversight to ensure our City is taking action to reduce our waste footprint.

Thank you for letting me testify before this committee. Climate change is a very real threat that demands immediate action from every level of government in every place across the globe. I urge this committee to pass this Zero Waste package.

Caitlin

Candice Cotler

Lefferts Avenue

BK NY 11225

June 15 Sanitation Hearing Testimony

Hello, my name is Candice Cotler. I work with a local zero waste services company, am a recent Zero Waste Academy alum, and am a proud if not newer member of the incredible team at the SaveOurCompost Coalition – I am also a lifelong activist.

Creating a sustainable New York City should be of the utmost importance to us all, and it's not hard to see that this goal is impossible without a robust sanitation plan that can keep up with the immense amount of waste generated by her constituents. We all know very well by now that without a booming and equitable organics program that there is no way New York City can ever truly be considered a green city, or even get close to carbon neutrality.

Doesn't New York City like to consider itself ahead of the curve? Don't we like to remind people all the time that we're the best city in the world? Well, frankly, we'll never be the best city in the world if we don't at least do something about the incredible amount of rescuable organic materials rotting away in other communities' landfills.

The 5 bills being put forth would be a sturdy foundation towards building a New York City that considers not only those of us currently living here, but for future generations to come. The city has spent too much time and money blaming constituents for non-participation in woefully inadequate programs.

There's been a lot of questions about which bill, or which combination of bills, would be the most effective towards New York City's goals - And frankly, I'm of the mind that these bills are all incredibly important. Every single one of the bills being put before the city exists with merit and cause and all of them work together to give us the structure we need.

Bill 244, Universal Mandatory Composting is an absolute must - However, without equally accessible community composting programs through the CORE act (bills 280 and 281) , *Zero Waste Mandate and Reporting bills 275 and 274*, we don't have the tools the build a flexible and appropriate rollout for the mandatory composting. All of these bills are necessary.

Breaking up these bills makes them more palatable for the city to consider, and truly nothing else. The time for baby steps and cautious movement forward is over - we are, quite literally, running out of time.

From: Carl Blumenthal <carlblumnthl@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 16, 2022 1:02 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] In Support of a Zero Waste Future

I, Carl Blumenthal, and my wife, Susan Palm, live at ### Ocean Parkway #, Brooklyn 11218. We are testifying in support of the Zero Waste package of bills (Intros 0244, 0275, 0276, and 1942) that the Committee on Sanitation considered at their 6/15/22 hearing. Passage of these bills is essential for our City to meet the goal of Zero Waste by 2030 and reduce the negative impacts of climate change.

Rather than repeating the testimony of many others on the merits of the proposed legislation, I prefer to share the story of how composting is a way of life for myself, a fourth-generation Brooklynite, and for Susan, who hails from the dairy farms of Wisconsin, where her family always tended kitchen gardens.

We are both avid gardeners who have maintained a compost bin in the backyard of our coop building for more than 30 years. Using homemade compost, Susan transformed the rubble-strewn, weed-filled area into a plot that yields vegetables, fruits, and flowers, beginning in 1989 when she moved in. Inspired by her example, some of our building neighbors now also garden there and maintain their own compost bin. Susan transplants some of the flowers to the front and side of our building, thereby beautifying the neighborhood.

At our and other residents' urging, our building participated in the City's curbside organics collection for a year, but that ended, to our great chagrin, during the pandemic when the City disbanded the program. Current public and private efforts to substitute neighborhood drop-off points for collection are both cumbersome and ineffective, given the enormity of the organics waste stream. (As regular financial contributors to City Harvest, we also try to reduce food waste at its source.)

We also yearn for the good old days when the City picked up Fall leaves that, after composting by the Sanitation Department at the closed Fountain Avenue Landfill in Brooklyn, were made available for free to residents.

Because Susan worked as a horticultural therapist at Kingsboro Psychiatric Center, she used this treasure to complement the manure donated by the Urban Cowboys from their stables off the Belt Parkway. By working in the hospital's organic gardens and greenhouses, patients not only improved their recoveries from mental illness and substance abuse, but also provided plants for local community gardens.

Susan has also applied our homemade compost to the flowers she planted at the Windsor Terrace branch of the Brooklyn Public Library as well as to grow blossoms she donated for sale to benefit various greening groups.

As an environmental reporter for the Brooklyn Daily Eagle, I wrote about the borough's community gardens and the important role composting plays in reclaiming vacant lots for this purpose. I have also covered many "Making Brooklyn Bloom" conferences at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, where we are both members, and, at which Susan gave away vegetable and herb sprouts from Kingsboro Psych Center's Urban Oasis program. Composting is always prominently featured at these events.

However unique our story, we believe it represents the desire of many borough residents, if not to compost and garden themselves, then to participate in organics recycling, thereby reducing emissions from this source in landfills, where mixed with other garbage it is uncontrolled and contributes to global warming.

Therefore, we hope the City will both sell the organic waste to commercial composters and re-institute (a) site(s) in the city for free pick-up of processed compost.

Intro0244-2022

Mandatory Composting

Dear Committee,

I talk to my building into composting in 2019 and met a lot of resistance. By the time composting was canceled in 2020, most people in the building were composting and loving it. We were sad to see it go, then happy to see it return.

The lesson here is that people who try it, tend to like it. The people who haven't tried it yet just are not aware of the benefits. Aside from the benefits of keeping food waste out of landfills and letting it go back to the earth as nature intended, it also cuts down on the vermin problem. We all know that the rodent population in the city is out of control and this is probably one of the best selling points for people who have not yet tried composting.

If you take a look at composting, the benefits are clear. There may be some upfront cost but after the program is set up and working the associated costs with waste management actually go down.

We have an obligation to work towards zero waste, and even though we might never actually get there, composting is an excellent first step with lots of benefits and almost no downside. I would urge you to pass this bill and make composting mandatory in New York City.

Christine Campbell

Submitting remarks related to the Zero Waste Hearing on June 15, 2022

My name is Claire, Global Communications Lead at [GAIA](#), an international network of grassroots groups, zero waste implementers, and policy experts focused on building just and equitable zero waste systems around the world. I'm also a resident of Ditmas park, Brooklyn.

I welcome the Zero Waste Legislative package as an essential step towards meeting NYC's zero waste goals.

As the climate crisis continues to worsen, NYC can play a key leadership role in the global space, showing that a major city can make a just transition away from our current wasteful economy that acts as though our planet, and our most vulnerable communities are disposable, to a thriving model of resource conservation and equity. But right now NYC's reputation around the world isn't so great. We still send our waste to an aging incinerator, a waste management strategy that's increasingly seen as backwards in the global community, as evidenced by the fact that the EU Parliament phased out public support schemes for Waste-to-Energy incineration five years ago.

We also have been shipping our plastic waste problems elsewhere for other communities, particularly in the Global South, to deal with. For example, recent research from the Basel Action Network shows evidence of 136,000 kilograms of toxic PVC plastic waste exported illegally from the United States to Nigeria, including from New York, and groups in Nigeria are calling on US cities like NYC to stop perpetrating waste colonialism and deal with its own waste.

The emphasis on boosting access to organics collection and composting is of particular importance. Methane, a GHG over 80x as potent as CO₂, has emerged globally as a priority GHG to reduce, and 20% of all methane emissions worldwide come from the waste sector, particularly the landfilling of organics. According to a [2021 United Nations report](#), methane emissions must be reduced by 45% by 2030 for the world to have a fighting chance at staving off catastrophic climate change. At the COP26 conference last year President Joe Biden announced that over 100 nations signed on to the [Global Methane Pledge](#), which commits signatories to reducing their methane emissions by 30% by 2030 compared to 2020 levels.

[According to the latest research, composting can reduce global solid waste methane emissions by 78% by 2030.](#) But in order to meet our planetary goals, the world is looking to cities like NYC to step up and take a leadership role. The good news is that curbside composting is being achieved by cities around the world! Although I was born in NYC, for many years I lived in Berkeley where curbside composting is a given.

Composting waste has numerous co-benefits— soil enriched with compost has been shown to be more absorbent of floodwaters (something on all of our minds), can help detoxify the soil, increases carbon sequestration, and boosts crop yields sustainably. It's a no-brainer. In addition to the numerous climate and environmental benefits, [composting systems can create 3x as many jobs as disposal](#), and we have the opportunity to create *good* jobs that support healthy communities, particularly those who have historically been most impacted by our current model.

Also the suggestion that we need to give people voluntary participation before mandatory is not giving New Yorkers enough credit. Time and time again New Yorkers have demonstrated that they want composting opportunities, and with an investment in education programs with clear messaging. DSNY is dragging their feet while the climate crisis is at our door. Now is the time for bold action, not half-hearted efforts.

In closing, I want to reiterate my support for the proposed mandate that DSNY establish and operate at least three organics drop off sites in each community district, and city-wide curbside residential organics collection. It is critical that *everyone* has access to these programs, not just those in the wealthiest neighborhoods. We're all in this together. NYC has the opportunity to be the leader that the world needs on organics diversion, and with this package I believe we'll be well on our way. Thank you for your time, and for this great initiative!

From: Dale Hoagland <dalehoagland@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 16, 2022 9:15 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter in support of Zero waste package

My name is Dale Hoagland and I am testifying from south Brooklyn. I'm writing today to testify in support of the five pieces of legislation heard at the June 15th committee hearing. The Zero Waste package, led by Council Members Hanif, Powers, and Nurse are essential to our City meeting our goal of Zero Waste by 2030.

Every year, our City generates 3.2 million tons of trash, the most of any City in the United States. The vast majority of this waste is sent to landfills up and down the East Coast where it sits and rots. Many of these landfills are located near communities of color and have for decades caused chronic health problems in those communities. Furthermore, a third of that waste is organic material that when it decomposes releases methane, a greenhouse gas that is more than 25 times more destructive than Carbon Dioxide. By passing the Zero Waste package in front of the committee today, our City can take real and meaningful steps to reduce our carbon footprint and get our City on track to send zero waste to landfills by 2030.

With mandatory residential composting and the CORE act, we can ensure that New Yorkers have every opportunity to effectively dispose of their organic waste. Composting will not just reduce greenhouse gases, it creates an amazing byproduct that strengthens our soil and helps farmers across our state. An expanded composting program will also create thousands of good paying green union jobs for our City!

Additionally, the Zero Waste mandating and reporting legislation will provide concrete goals and benchmarks for our City to meet in our journey to Zero Waste. With just eight years until 2030, we need strong Council oversight to ensure our City is taking action to reduce our waste footprint.

Thank you for letting me testify before this committee. Climate change is a very real threat that demands immediate action from every level of government in every place across the globe. I urge this committee to pass this Zero Waste package.

Dale Hoagland, Flatbush (11226)

From: Dori Dietz <doridietz1@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 14, 2022 3:05 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] In support of a zero waste future!

My name is Dori Dietz Blitz. I am writing from Brooklyn to testify in support of the five pieces of legislation being heard at today's committee hearing. The Zero Waste package, led by Council Members Hanif, Powers, and Nurse are essential to our City meeting our goal of Zero Waste by 2030.

Every year, we generates 3.2 million tons of trash. The vast majority of this waste is sent to landfills up and down the East Coast where it sits and rots. Many of these landfills are located near communities of color and have for decades caused chronic health problems in those communities. Furthermore, a third of that waste is organic material that when it decomposes releases methane, a greenhouse gas that is more than 25 times more destructive than Carbon Dioxide. By passing the Zero Waste package in front of the committee today, NYC can take real and meaningful steps to reduce our carbon footprint and get our City on track to send zero waste to landfills by 2030.

With mandatory residential composting and the CORE act, we can ensure that we can effectively dispose of our organic waste. Composting will reduce greenhouse gases, while creating an amazing byproduct that strengthens our soil and helps farmers across our state. An expanded composting program will also create thousands of good paying green union jobs for our City!

Zero Waste mandating and reporting legislation will provide concrete goals and benchmarks for our City to meet in our journey to Zero Waste. With just eight years until 2030, strong Council oversight is essential to ensure our City is taking action to reduce our waste footprint.

Climate change is a very real threat. It demands immediate action from every level of government in every place across the globe. I urge this committee to pass this Zero Waste package.

Thank you for holding this hybrid hearing and receiving written testimony.

My name is Dorian Fulvio. I'm a lifelong New Yorker, a retired public servant, a concerned citizen, and a member of 350NYC. I support all five bills (Intro 0244-2022, Intro 0274-2022, Intro 0275-2022, Intro 0280-2022, and Intro 0281-2022), and I urge the Council to do the same. I will focus my testimony on Intro 244 (Mandatory City-wide Residential Curbside Organics Collection).

I grew up in the Pelham Bay section of the Bronx. I can distinctly remember the steady stream of pollution spewing garbage trucks going through my neighborhood on their way to and from the foul garbage dump near City Island and Orchard Beach. The horrible stench of all that rotting garbage is one of my indelible childhood memories. Only later did I realize the terrible toll that all this pollution took on my community, with environmental effects we are still dealing with today.

While some issues associated with the former Bronx-Pelham Landfill may be unique, it generally is no different than any other landfill. When I was growing up, Pelham Bay was a low income community, so it was no surprise that we had to live near a dump. Landfills are generally located in low income neighborhoods and communities of color, exposing residents to environmental toxins that leave them with a higher incidence of a number of serious health issues.

Organic waste currently accounts for one third of New York City's garbage. In the absence of oxygen in a landfill, the decomposition of organic waste emits methane. While most discussions of climate change focus on CO₂, methane as a greenhouse gas (GHG) is up to 80 times more potent than CO₂ over a 20 year period. Project Drawdown offers many strategies to reduce GHGs, including cutting methane emissions through composting. In fact, Project Drawdown ranks composting #60 as a solution to global warming, based on the total amount of GHG which can be avoided.

Organic waste is a valuable fertilizer, rich in nutrients, and can be used to enrich the soil in parks, community gardens, and street trees. Compost can aid in carbon sequestration and enhance the soil's ability to retain water by 5- to 20-fold, making it an especially valuable tool for flood mitigation from heavy rainstorms as the planet grows hotter.

Superstorm Sandy and Hurricane Ida showed that New York is very vulnerable to outsized storms fueled by global warming. We must continue to make progress in fighting climate change, and curbside collection of organics for composting is one small but powerful tool in our arsenal. San Francisco and Seattle have already successfully implemented this with high participation rates, and there's no reason that New York cannot do the same. We just need to follow their lead by making it mandatory and providing our citizens with the appropriate educational materials and outreach.

Please enact this legislation and let New York City's waste management policies join other climate leading cities like San Francisco, Seattle and Copenhagen.

Thank you,

Dorian Fulvio

I've been concerned about climate change for many years and I've gotten involved with different local groups trying to make pragmatic changes. Reducing waste through composting will divert one third of the City's trash from landfills, saving us money and limiting CO2 going into the atmosphere, the main cause of climate change. Composting can create good jobs, twice as many as landfill operations. I am asking the Council to pass Int 0244 for mandatory curbside organic pick-up. Composting will not be cost-effective in NYC unless we scale it up to include the entire city. Int 0280 and Int 0281 are important too as a way to educate people on the proper disposal of organics. Int 0274 and Int 0275 will provide deadlines and a way to publicize data in an understandable way. This is an important package of bills that will save us money and clean our streets. I think the time is ripe. Yesterday, I was at a community organizing meeting in my district and six citizens who chose the environment as their interest - and who I had never met before - only wanted to talk about sanitation - composting and dirty streets. I believe if composting is made mandatory and New Yorkers are educated properly, the transition to composting, will become as natural as when we were made to wear seatbelts when driving. Thank you for consideration.

Eileen Leonard

From: Emily Greenspan <ergreenspan@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 14, 2022 2:21 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support of Intro 244

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of Intro 244. I have participated in the "pilot" City compost collection program since its inception. During this period of time my garbage has decreased by about 40%, the odor emanating from the garbage can (which no longer contains food waste) has decreased dramatically, and there has been no rodent problem in the garbage collection area of my home.

With mandatory residential composting and the CORE act, we can ensure that New Yorkers have every opportunity to effectively dispose of their organic waste. Composting will not just reduce greenhouse gases, it creates an amazing byproduct that strengthens our soil and helps farmers across our state. An expanded composting program will also create thousands of good paying green union jobs for our City!

Although in the first 3 years of the program costs will increase about \$39 million, according to an April 2022 report by New York City's Independent Budget Office (IBO), **those costs would even out in the fourth year and then result in savings of about \$33 million per year after that, the IBO said.**

I sincerely hope that this bill will be enacted with a long-term view to addressing climate change in our City.

Emily Greenspan, M.D.
Emily Greenspan ergreenspan@yahoo.com Brooklyn, NY

From: Eric Eisner <eric.eisner1@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, June 17, 2022 9:23 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6/15 Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management Hearing -
Written Testimony

This testimony is regarding INT 0244-2022 and the related bills INT 0274-2022 and INT 0275-2022.

I am a resident and homeowner in Brooklyn, and I strongly support the passage of INT 0244-2022, which would create a citywide curbside organics program for residential buildings. This bill is in fact long overdue. When people argue that organics collection would be expensive, they miss the fact that we already pay to haul all that organic waste with our non-compostable trash and then dump it in landfills. Once buried in a landfill, decaying organics release methane, contributing to the greenhouse effect at a higher rate in the short term than carbon dioxide (methane has 80 times the global warming potential of carbon dioxide, in the first 20 years). Studies have shown that the initial expense of collecting organics separately and then composting them would turn into a substantial net savings within a few years. Composting organics waste means that methane is kept out of the atmosphere. High-quality soil can then be produced for residential gardens, city parks, and agriculture.

It is by now apparent that the climate crisis is already upon us - consider the flooding that has taken place in New York in the past year, and the unprecedented heat waves around the globe. It is obvious that the world will need to move to more sustainable practices as the crisis worsens. However, the longer we wait, we're not only making the problem worse, we're making it harder to change. The sooner we develop the infrastructure and the habits to support organics collection - which will require educating the public and messaging, like with recycling - the cheaper and easier it will be.

As a homeowner, I'm able to compost in my backyard. I've learned that it is incredibly easy to get in the habit of separating my compostable organics from the rest of my trash. My small backyard composter doesn't smell and my trash doesn't attract rodents - the way the enormous bags of garbage some of my neighbors put out do! And it is amazing to see how light and small the bags of trash I put out for collection are now compared to how heavy they were before I started composting. When I lived in an apartment earlier in Brooklyn, I tried many times to collect organics to take to drop-off sites like the Greenmarket, but this was really difficult to do consistently, especially with a family's worth of scraps- it means keeping them on your counter or in your fridge, then lugging the dripping mess once a week or more, and the organics collections can be a bus or subway ride away for some people! In other words, drop-off sites are great and an important supplement, but they are no substitute for regular curbside organics collection programs for residential buildings. Cities around the world are managing such programs successfully. New York must be a climate leader and adopt such a program now.

I also wish to express my support for INT 0274-2022 and INT 0275-2022. These are important measures to make sure waste diversion programs are accountable and successful.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Respectfully,

Eric Eisner
Sullivan Place
Brooklyn, NY 11225

eric.eisner1@gmail.com

From: Erin Ewart <emewar@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 16, 2022 9:19 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Written testimony for hearing June 15 - Committee on Sanitation

I am a Brooklyn resident writing in support of the five pieces of legislation from the Sanitation committee hearing on 6/15/22. The Zero Waste package, led by Council Members Hanif, Powers, and Nurse is essential to meeting our goal of Zero Waste by 2030.

Every year, our City generates 3.2 million tons of trash, the most of any City in the United States. The vast majority of this waste is sent to landfills up and down the East Coast where it sits and rots. Many of these landfills are located near communities of color and have for decades caused chronic health problems in those communities. Furthermore, a third of that waste is organic material that when it decomposes releases methane, a greenhouse gas that is more than 25 times more destructive than Carbon Dioxide. By passing the Zero Waste package in front of the committee today, our City can take real and meaningful steps to reduce our carbon footprint and get our City on track to send zero waste to landfills by 2030.

With mandatory residential composting and the CORE act, we can ensure that New Yorkers have every opportunity to effectively dispose of their organic waste. Composting will not just reduce greenhouse gases, it creates an amazing byproduct that strengthens our soil and helps farmers across our state. An expanded composting program will also create thousands of good paying green union jobs for our City!

Additionally, the Zero Waste mandating and reporting legislation will provide concrete goals and benchmarks for our City to meet in our journey to Zero Waste. With just eight years until 2030, we need strong Council oversight to ensure our City is taking action to reduce our waste footprint.

Thank you for accepting my testimony. Climate change is a very real threat that demands immediate action from every level of government in every place across the globe. I urge this committee to pass this Zero Waste package.

Erin Ewart
Brooklyn, NY

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Erin Ewart
[Careers for Social Impact](#)

Connect with me on [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#)

From: George K <gkoundour@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 16, 2022 8:13 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter in support of the Zero Waste Package

My name is George Koundourakis and I am testifying from south Brooklyn. I'm writing today to testify in support of the five pieces of legislation heard at the June 15th committee hearing. The Zero Waste package, led by Council Members Hanif, Powers, and Nurse are essential to our City meeting our goal of Zero Waste by 2030.

Every year, our City generates 3.2 million tons of trash, the most of any City in the United States. The vast majority of this waste is sent to landfills up and down the East Coast where it sits and rots. Many of these landfills are located near communities of color and have for decades caused chronic health problems in those communities. Furthermore, a third of that waste is organic material that when it decomposes releases methane, a greenhouse gas that is more than 25 times more destructive than Carbon Dioxide. By passing the Zero Waste package in front of the committee today, our City can take real and meaningful steps to reduce our carbon footprint and get our City on track to send zero waste to landfills by 2030.

With mandatory residential composting and the CORE act, we can ensure that New Yorkers have every opportunity to effectively dispose of their organic waste. Composting will not just reduce greenhouse gases, it creates an amazing byproduct that strengthens our soil and helps farmers across our state. An expanded composting program will also create thousands of good paying green union jobs for our City!

Additionally, the Zero Waste mandating and reporting legislation will provide concrete goals and benchmarks for our City to meet in our journey to Zero Waste. With just eight years until 2030, we need strong Council oversight to ensure our City is taking action to reduce our waste footprint.

Thank you for letting me testify before this committee. Climate change is a very real threat that demands immediate action from every level of government in every place across the globe. I urge this committee to pass this Zero Waste package.

Thank you,
George Koundourakis
Glenwood Road
Brooklyn, NY

From: Georgi P <gpageonline@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 16, 2022 9:53 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 6/15 Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management Hearing -
Written Testimony

This testimony is regarding:

- **Int 0244-2022: This bill would create a citywide curbside organics program for residential buildings.**
- **Int 0280-2022: This bill would mandate that DSNY establish and operate at least one community recycling center in each community district.**
- **Int 0281-2022: This bill would mandate DSNY establish and operate at least three organics drop off sites in each community district.**
- **Int 0274-2022: This bill tasks the Administration with meeting a citywide waste diversion goal by 2030.**
- **Int 0275-2022: This bill would require the Department of Sanitation to report on the City's progress toward sending zero waste to landfill by 2030.**

I fully support these bills and encourage them to be scheduled for a vote as soon as possible.

Thank you Chair Nurse and members of the Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management for holding this hearing, and thank you Council Members Hanif and Powers for fighting for the bold, green vision for our city that your bills represent.

My name is Georgi Page and I am a senior organizer with 350Brooklyn's City Action committee. I was introduced to composting some 30 years ago as a student in Seattle, but stopped when I moved to New York. When I started again it was due less to 'muscle memory' - than a stark reminder of my responsibility to the planet.

And while I am somewhat late to the public conversation around compost and zero waste I do know that the broader 350Brooklyn community wholeheartedly supports all 5 of these bills because they will ultimately reduce greenhouse gas emissions and that is our core focus.

Yes, Zero Waste is a bold goal - but we must begin to work towards it NOW. If South Korea, a country of 52 million, can recycle 95% of their food waste, up from 2% in 1995, we know that it is possible to evolve New Yorkers' attitudes toward waste. Our job then becomes doing everything we can to help make the case. According to 2019's 'Composting in America' report, ensuring the success of a composting program comes down to four principles: affordability, education, convenience and frequency. Requiring residential composting will force NYC to address these challenges.

...And it should be easy!

Because one interesting thing about New Yorker's reported hesitancy and resistance to universal composting, for example, is that we are not asking people to sacrifice anything - we're just asking them to do things differently. Better.

In my little corner of Crown Heights a local citizen revived a community garden that was established by previous residents many decades before. This garden has become a hub for educating and engaging local residents about compost and its connection to more bountiful harvests, which are then given away to the community for free. The ability to see the results of composting made all of the difference - until the private citizen managing the garden and paying for it out of his own pocket grew exhausted and ended the composting program. Needless to say, it's not a scalable model. In the meantime, though, this group of 20-30 citizens learned directly that food scrap separation makes garbage LESS smelly and helps transform 'trash' back into 'treasure'. A revolutionary concept!...that has actually been around for about 12,000 years...

But most citizens have no idea that these changes will make their lives better...so, again, it is up to us to explain, it's OUR JOBS. We can't just say 'folks don't get it', or 'they're not ready' we must do what's needed to make it so.

It's up to us to explain as many times as it takes in as many ways as it requires that food scrap collection is not an attempt to provide an open air buffet for the city's rodent population! We must not just tell but show how a zero waste culture works. At the same time finding ways to empower our fellow citizens, explaining not just WHAT they must do and HOW but sharing exactly WHY, so they can feel proud to be a part of the solution! We should also draw a clear line between the mandates of the CLCPA, our Climate Mobilisation Act and our city's declaration of a Climate Emergency. We must be clear that these bold plans are necessary as a means to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prevent more tragedy and loss of life. And we should explain how these systems will over time save our taxpayer money, with costs levelling out in the 5th year and saving our city an estimated \$33 Million, thereafter

So, along with calling for a swift vote and the passage of these bills, we look forward to seeing and being a part of a mass mobilisation. We need determined outreach, education and collaboration - maybe even financial incentives or fines - to create the commitment that will create the change!

Thank you for believing in New Yorkers and I look forward to continuing the fight for a better future and a greener planet with you!

Georgi Page
Crown Heights Resident
Brooklyn, NY 11213

Sr. Organizer, 350Brooklyn

Testimony of Gloria Boyce-Charles
Sanitation Committee Hearing
June 15, 2022

Thank you, Council Member Nurse and members of the Sanitation Committee, for the opportunity to offer written testimony regarding the Sanitation legislation that is currently under discussion. My name is Gloria Boyce-Charles. I am a member of the Eastern Queens Alliance, where this year we have worked with QSWAB and our local elected officials to launch a solid waste management initiative entitled **Waste Not: Let's Talk Trash**. This initiative seeks to change the ways that people think about trash...the things that they discard and the ways they discard them. Our goal is to help people to make the connection between the ways they handle their trash, clean communities and global warming. It is a tall task, and one that is especially important in our environmental justice communities, since these are the communities that are likely to suffer the greatest climate change impacts. I personally, have learned a lot in the process of spearheading this effort. And today, I speak on behalf of myself, my hopes for a sustainable community and a healthy planet.

I applaud your Committee's legislation proposing citywide curbside pickup of organics. It adds an element of equity, accessibility, and simplicity to this essential component of the Zero Waste program. And making curbside pickup mandatory impresses upon us the critical element of urgency. You specify R2 and R3 zones in your legislation; but what about NYCHA housing and other larger apartment complexes? How are they accounted for in your legislation?

Likewise, I wholeheartedly support the requirement for clearly stated Zero Waste goals and timelines along with regular reporting of progress. But as the Commissioner indicated during the hearing, current Zero Waste goals may be unrealistic given the many setbacks over the years. With that in mind, I think that an important first step is to revisit and re-set those goals. All of these elements will help to build an infrastructure that makes Zero Waste more attainable.

I've learned that it's not easy to manage trash. The concept is a simple one, but the execution can be unwieldy. People need support, reinforcement, and practice to figure out how to recycle their metals, plastics, glass and paper so that they wind up in the recycling facilities and not in the landfills and incinerators. This is the case even moreso when it comes to handling organic waste. People need to understand the impacts resulting from our overuse of plastics and our tendency to buy more of everything than we need or could possibly ever use. This is why the educational component of your legislation is so critical. When combined with the legislative program, it provides powerful tools to help build the **cultural** shift that is essential to the success of this Zero Waste effort. It's a culture where we value reuse and repair instead of disposal, where we encourage and positively reinforce proper disposal of recyclable and organic waste, and where we all make an active effort to keep our communities clean. It's a culture that helps people to see that they have not only a legal, but also a **communal responsibility** to manage their trash responsibly. And culture trumps policy every time. With that in mind, I'd like to encourage you to stress and build in **community engagement** as an important component of your legislation and administration of Zero Waste, just as you build in education. The community must be included in the conversations that help to build and implement the Zero Waste framework. Right now, Zero Waste and global warming are the farthest things from most people's minds. And that's simply terrifying. But if we include community people meaningfully in developing and implementing the education and some of the processes that we build around the initiative, we might be able to turn this around. For example, can we engage community members and organizations as decisions are made about the organics and recyclable collection facilities that you plan to place in their districts...

Testimony of Gloria Boyce-Charles
Sanitation Committee Hearing
June 15, 2022

Where the facilities will be located? How they will be designed, administered, and even staffed? Can the facilities themselves become Zero Waste educational centers? How will communities be included in these discussions so that they can see their place in the equation and take some ownership?

Are there ways to engage community activists/organizations to design outreach within their communities, especially via grants or RFPs? And can we please streamline the funding process? Too often, when community groups are offered funding, the financing is reimbursable, forcing them to commit their own funds upfront. This process is onerous and needs to be redesigned to make community leadership more feasible.

I'd also like to bring to the committee my concerns about the litter in our streets and the dumping in our open spaces. These disturbing practices contribute to the sanitation and health of our communities and the health of our oceans and our planet. DSNY has been great with supporting cleanup operations at dumping sites, but we need to find ways to stop these behaviors in the first place. Again, by explicitly addressing these issues in our legislative, educational and cultural interventions we can achieve this.

Finally, I think that more emphasis needs to be placed in two other areas:

- One is on the role of commercial waste. The impact of commercial waste lacks transparency, but it contributes significantly to our global warming concerns. The unequitable placement of waste transfer stations in environmental justice communities is certainly one aspect of the issue. But at an even more basic level, we need to address the ways that commercial buildings and city agencies are participating in recycling and organic waste sorting and disposal. Are these entities being required to sort their waste responsibly? And in cases where they do have the opportunity to sort, is their compliance mandatory? Is it being monitored and enforced?
- The other area of emphasis is the harmful effects of incineration. Our Zero Waste goals specify Zero Waste to **landfills** but what about incinerators and other combustible solutions? Stronger language must be built into Zero Waste legislation, goals and strategies to account for the global warming impacts of waste that is eliminated through various forms of combustion. There needs to be more transparency in this regard. As we eliminate landfills in some areas, are we replacing them with incinerators or other combustion solutions?

Thank you for your time and your work in this space.

Hello, my name is Hal Schriever. I am a New York City librarian and a member of DSA's NYC chapter. I am here to voice my opposition to Mayor Eric Adams' executive budget, and to name that sanitation services to Bushwick and Cypress Hills are inadequate and produce unhealthy and unpleasant conditions in these neighborhoods.

Two years into the pandemic, working-class New Yorkers are in crisis. COVID-19 cases are surging, landlords are raising rents and families struggle to stay in their homes. But the mayor continues to favor the wealthy and powerful over everyday New Yorkers. His budget makes devastating cuts to vital city services, like housing, healthcare, sanitation, and education, while leaving the NYPD's \$10-billion budget intact. Sanitation cuts are evident: Bushwick and Cypress Hills streets are strewn with trash, very few trash cans are available, and trash regularly doesn't get picked up. Empty lots filled with garbage are left to sit, attracting rats and other pests. Cleaning up our neighborhoods— including provisioning sidewalks with trash cans and offering compost pickup and regular recycling service that actually accomplishes its tasks— would go a long way to helping New Yorkers live lives of dignity. Instead, we prioritize cops sitting around on their phone —when they aren't shooting people's dogs or arresting teenagers for turnstile-jumping or failing to stop mass shootings.

Today, I urge the Council to fight against the mayor's program of austerity and punishment. I also urge the Council to act on two deadly crises facing our city that are also relevant to our city's sanitation: climate catastrophe and the overdose epidemic. We need \$3.1 billion for the Streets Plan, \$1.8 billion for green public schools, \$250 million for Fair Fares,¹ and \$10 million to expand life-saving safe consumption sites to all five boroughs so drug users do not leave dangerous paraphernalia on our streets for lack of other options.

Finally, the Council must reject the mayor's regressive return to law and order. I also urge the Council to demonstrate their commitment to racial justice by cutting failed NYPD criminalization programs like the ineffective and violent plainclothes units, the so-called Subway Safety Plan, and ending all NYPD response to mental health calls.

Thank you, Council Members and Committee Chair Brannan, for hearing my testimony.

¹ Fair Fares is a city-run program that provides half-price MetroCards for low-income New Yorkers. Increasing funding for Fair Fares to \$250 million would double the income cutoff for eligibility, so more New Yorkers can qualify for the program.

From: Helen Engelhardt <helen.ruthhart@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 16, 2022 6:17 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter in support of Zero Waste PACKAGE

My name is Helen Engelhardt and I am testifying from south Brooklyn. I'm writing today to testify in support of the five pieces of legislation heard at the June 15th committee hearing. The Zero Waste package, led by Council Members Hanif, Powers, and Nurse are essential to our City meeting our goal of Zero Waste by 2030.

Every year, our City generates 3.2 million tons of trash, the most of any City in the United States. The vast majority of this waste is sent to landfills up and down the East Coast where it sits and rots. Many of these landfills are located near communities of color and have for decades caused chronic health problems in those communities. Furthermore, a third of that waste is organic material that when it decomposes releases methane, a greenhouse gas that is more than 25 times more destructive than Carbon Dioxide. By passing the Zero Waste package in front of the committee today, our City can take real and meaningful steps to reduce our carbon footprint and get our City on track to send zero waste to landfills by 2030.

With mandatory residential composting and the CORE act, we can ensure that New Yorkers have every opportunity to effectively dispose of their organic waste. Composting will not just reduce greenhouse gases, it creates an amazing byproduct that strengthens our soil and helps farmers across our state. An expanded composting program will also create thousands of good paying green union jobs for our City!

Additionally, the Zero Waste mandating and reporting legislation will provide concrete goals and benchmarks for our City to meet in our journey to Zero Waste. With just eight years until 2030, we need strong Council oversight to ensure our City is taking action to reduce our waste footprint.

Thank you for letting me testify before this committee. Climate change is a very real threat that demands immediate action from every level of government in every place across the globe. I urge this committee to pass this Zero Waste package.

I will add that I have been personally composting vegetable waste generated from my kitchen and garden for years in a composter set up in my back garden. This makes me feel good but is no way a solution to our city's solid waste problems!!!

Helen Engelhardt



Howard Stern

Grand Street, N.Y., N.Y. 10002

To whom it may concern,

We have lived in the East Village since 1989. During that time my family first started composting at Union Square and on 7th Street in the LES in the 1990's which funneled the compost to the LES Ecology Center. When we moved to Grand Street where we continued and even got the Co Op that we currently live in to participate in the city wide composting program. This was a great success in our community until it got gutted during the pandemic. I have heard Gale Brewer and others speak eloquently that the program to be fiscally responsible would need to be increased not decreased which is why I am in support of mandating City Wide Composting

Composting is an essential service if we are to ever come to grips with the climate crisis that is upon us. Let's stop kidding each other that it is down the line. And let's also not kid ourselves that the CMA and CLCPA will be enough to mitigate the effects. We need to do everything possible to reduce our greenhouse gases.

We do a great disservice to society by not addressing the climate crisis. The city says there is no money because of the pandemic. Inflation woes will also be used as justification to do little or nothing regarding this matter. The city says that parks can't be used for composting. The city says that parks need to have parking for city agencies instead of composting facilities. How do we want future generations to look back at this period? As a period where the leaders took action or one where the political leaders kowtow to political complacency and expediency.

Please do the right thing for the sake of all New Yorkers present and future.

Sincerely Yours, Howard Stern

From: Isabelle de Geofroy <idegeofroy@me.com>
Sent: Friday, June 17, 2022 5:55 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter in support of the Zero Waste Package

Hello,

I'm writing today from Chelsea, Manhattan, to testify in support of the five pieces of legislation heard at the June 15th committee hearing. The Zero Waste package, led by Council Members Hanif, Powers, and Nurse are essential to our City meeting our goal of Zero Waste by 2030.

Every year, our City generates 3.2 million tons of trash, the most of any City in the United States. The vast majority of this waste is sent to landfills up and down the East Coast where it sits and rots. Many of these landfills are located near communities of color and have for decades caused chronic health problems in those communities. Furthermore, a third of that waste is organic material that when it decomposes releases methane, a greenhouse gas that is more than 25 times more destructive than Carbon Dioxide. By passing the Zero Waste package in front of the committee today, our City can take real and meaningful steps to reduce our carbon footprint and get our City on track to send zero waste to landfills by 2030.

With mandatory residential composting and the CORE act, we can ensure that New Yorkers have every opportunity to effectively dispose of their organic waste. Composting will not just reduce greenhouse gases, it also reduces the rat population and creates an amazing byproduct that strengthens our soil and helps farmers across our state. An expanded composting program will also create thousands of good paying green union jobs for our City!

Additionally, the Zero Waste mandating and reporting legislation will provide concrete goals and benchmarks for our City to meet in our journey to Zero Waste. With just eight years until 2030, we need strong Council oversight to ensure our City is taking action to reduce our waste footprint.

Thank you for letting me testify before this committee. Climate change is a very real threat that demands immediate action from every level of government in every place across the globe. I urge this committee to pass this Zero Waste package.

Sincerely,
Isabelle de Geofroy

From: John Stislow <john@stislow.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 16, 2022 4:05 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Universal Compost pick up | Hearing testimony

My name is John Stislow and I am testifying from south Brooklyn. I'm writing today to testify in support of the five pieces of legislation heard at the June 15th committee hearing. The Zero Waste package, led by Council Members Hanif, Powers, and Nurse are essential to our City meeting our goal of Zero Waste by 2030.

Every year, our City generates 3.2 million tons of trash, the most of any City in the United States. The vast majority of this waste is sent to landfills up and down the East Coast where it sits and rots. Many of these landfills are located near communities of color and have for decades caused chronic health problems in those communities. Furthermore, a third of that waste is organic material that when it decomposes releases methane, a greenhouse gas that is more than 25 times more destructive than Carbon Dioxide. By passing the Zero Waste package in front of the committee today, our City can take real and meaningful steps to reduce our carbon footprint and get our City on track to send zero waste to landfills by 2030.

With mandatory residential composting and the CORE act, we can ensure that New Yorkers have every opportunity to effectively dispose of their organic waste. Composting will not just reduce greenhouse gases, it creates an amazing byproduct that strengthens our soil and helps farmers across our state. An expanded composting program will also create thousands of good paying green union jobs for our City!

Additionally, the Zero Waste mandating and reporting legislation will provide concrete goals and benchmarks for our City to meet in our journey to Zero Waste. With just eight years until 2030, we need strong Council oversight to ensure our City is taking action to reduce our waste footprint.

Thank you for letting me testify before this committee. Climate change is a very real threat that demands immediate action from every level of government in every place across the globe. I urge this committee to pass this Zero Waste package.

John Stislow
GlenwoodRoad
Brooklyn, NY 11210

Hello. I am Joyce Bialik. I am commenting on CM Hanif's 0244 bill on behalf of the Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board. I am chair of the Board's Residential Recycling and Reuse Committee.

We wholeheartedly support a program of mandatory curbside composting for all residential buildings, including public housing under the NYC Housing Authority also known as NYCHA. Voluntary opt-in programs exclude residential buildings whose management has declined participation, even if their residents want it. As an example, District 7 in Manhattan recorded this February a total of 129,000 households interested in the program, but 49% of their building managers either did not successfully complete the application or declined participation. In a mandatory program, where all buildings in a district use brown bins instead of trash bags for their food scraps, we will see an increase in food scrap diversion rates and an end to DSNY organic trucks returning empty. As we divert more food waste from trash and come closer to the goal of zero waste we will see a significant drop of trash going to polluting incinerators and landfills. We also will see a reduction in rats from a building using trash bags for food scraps invading the grounds of buildings that are using brown bins. As we know, black plastic garbage bags with food attract rats as opposed to the hard plastic brown bins. But currently even buildings in the curbside composting program can be on DOH's rat activity list as in the example of my building, whose neighboring buildings are not in the program. That includes the NYCHA campus, Douglass Houses. Of course we are concerned about NYCHA not only because its exclusion from curbside composting could promote rat infestation in neighboring buildings but also because pests are one of the most serious problems for NYCHA residents. And as stated by my colleague on the board, Diana Blackwell, to be equitable recycling programs must include NYCHA buildings. To achieve the positive outcomes of a curbside composting universal program it must be mandated and it must include NYCHA buildings.

I am Rabbi Judith Edelstein, a member of the Jewish Climate Action Network and a resident of the Upper West Side. I am testifying today in support of Intro0244-2022, the bill that sets a deadline for mandatory composting in residential buildings. I am grateful to Council Member Hanif for introducing it and to my council member Gale Brewer as well as its other co-sponsors.

I began composting about six years ago, bringing my compost weekly to a NYCGrows compost collection site at the local greenmarket. There were times when I had too much compost to retain for a week and even took taxis to the Columbia University greenmarket as well as to the my daughter's apartment building, which is part of Columbia Housing and offered composting. After much pressure the management of my building began participating in the city program, and during the pandemic, when city composting was suspended, we hired a private compost company. We went from two bins to five within six months and are now back to participating in the city curbside pickup program. My super, who was originally an obstacle to composting, is now an enthusiast and advocate.

Composting is a simple and safe way for the city to reach its environmental goals. 34% of the waste stream is compostable. Keeping organics out of landfills means less CO₂ and, more importantly, less methane is released into the atmosphere. New York can only meet its 2030 carbon reduction goals if composting is available and mandatory for all New Yorkers.

Many individuals with whom I have spoken throughout the city are eager to participate in NYC composting and are disappointed in as well as frustrated by the city's lapse in continuing the curbside pickup program. There are buildings where tenants want composting, but the management or landlord does not understand the program. If it is mandatory, and the appropriate outreach and training implemented, as a city we will begin to achieve our environmental goals.

We are all impacted by the climate crisis. Curbside composting is an effective tool we can utilize to create a sustainable city. Please pass the mandatory composting bill as well as the other bills in the package and do not fail to provide the necessary funding.

I am a member of It's Easy Being Green, a neighborhood environmental group, who has actively supported composting in the city. I would think a progressive city such as ours should be having mandatory city-wide composting. It will reduce greenhouse gases and provide valuable nutrition to farms in the greater New York City and Dutchess county areas. My building has been doing it for several years and we have great participation in our building. I would think this would be a great asset to the city and to the entire area. New York City should promote all green efforts. Thank you

Karen Goodheart

12th St
Brooklyn, NY 11215

June 14, 2022

Dear New York City Council Members:

I am writing to express my wholehearted support for expanding composting into a city-wide program.

It is well documented that composting food and yard waste decreases methane and carbon emissions by a large amount.

Increasing the composting program would also help deter rats, which are becoming truly pervasive.

And it's not as if more waste would need to be hauled by increasing composting—the waste would just be handled differently.

It is time we took real steps to decrease carbon emissions, rather than just trying to “shame” people by posting poor energy ratings on a building's windows, for example. Too many people won't take action until they are told they have too.

Make composting mandatory city-wide!

Sincerely,

Kate C. Walker

I Kathie Young, resident at ### Seventh Ave., NYC, NY 1001

I totally - 100% - support Eric Bottcher's co-sponsored legislation that would institute universal composting across New York City. This needs to be seriously addressed in NYC.

These are serious times, global warming is costing the city billions, and composting is the BEST way to reduce waste and methane gas in NYC. It will cost less to compost to reduce waste, and green house gases, than anything else we can do. This is just good common sense, and I vote for such legislation.

I was extremely disappointed that curbside compost pick up was NOT restored to the city. Please make the right choice and pass this legislation.

June 15, 2022

To: New York City Council

From: Lorraine Forte
East 12th Street
New York, NY 10009

Re: Int 0281-2022

Dear Legislators,

For the past six years I have volunteered at the Avenue B and 12th Street compost drop off garden. It used to be Chidren's Garden. It has now been renamed Down to Earth Garden. The name changed 3 years ago because of the nature of what is accomplished there.

The following stats speak literal volumes about how much food waste can be managed at this site. Throughout the COVID shutdown and Sanitation's current lack of pick up, we have kept the site open. Like all Green Thumb gardens it is volunteer run. We are struggling and at capacity. We are in desperate need of brown bin pickup so we can continue to handle the volume of people in the community that want to compost. The amount of people wanting to compost is escalating and we are having to scale down when we should be able to scale up.

The quantities of processed food waste can be found here:

<https://downtoearthgarden.org/activities/composting/quantity-of-food-waste-diverted/>

The summary for **2019**, the last full year we were a 24-hour drop-off:

Drop-off total: **10.82 tons**

Processed in garden: **6.16 tons** (56.9%) turned into either amended soil or compost.

Picked up by Sanitation: **4.66 tons** (43.1%) to be composted by DSNY.

The attached tables show (in 1 image file) how much food waste we can potentially process in-garden (our max capacities warm weather vs cold weather), in contrast to the estimated amount of food waste produced by the T area: all units (households) from buildings along 12th Street from Ave A to Ave B, and along Ave B from 13th St and 11th St; forming a T where Down to Earth Garden is at the T intersection. Drop off sites are a better solution to individual building collection. Most super's have their hands full dealing with the existing

recycling. Our neighborhood is dense and many or most of the new tenants are transient and uninvested and unfamiliar with recycling food waste.

Food waste, if all came from the T area* only.

| | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| <u>12th St between Ave A & B</u> | | Average lb/household/week: | 8.4 | | |
| 302 | units north side | 2536.8 | lbs/week | | |
| 199 | units south side | 1671.6 | lbs/week | | |
| 501 | units total | 4208.4 | lbs/week | | |
| <u>Ave B between 13th & 11th St</u> | | | | | |
| 128 | units south side | 1075.2 | lbs/week | | |
| 132 | units north side | 1108.8 | lbs/week | | |
| 260 | units total | 2184 | lbs/week | Current max capacities | |
| | | | | <u>Oct-Mar</u> | <u>Apr-Sept</u> |
| 761 | units total (T area) | 6392.4 | lbs/week | 903 lbs/week | 1,776 lbs/week |
| | | % of total (T area): | | 14.13% | 27.79% |

* T area, is where Down to Earth Garden is at the T intersection of 12th St & Ave B (12th St between Ave A & B, and Ave B from 13th St & 11th St).

Average lb per household per week: 8.4 lbs,
source: <https://www.nycfoodpolicy.org/food-waste-food-by-the-numbers/>

Source (number of units per address): <http://www.oasisnyc.net/map.aspx>

Current max capacities at Down to Earth Garden & El Sol Brillante**

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| Calc. for # of bear bins**: | 25 | bear bins | Avg cap. per bear bin: | 145 lbs |
| | Cold weather Oct-Mar | | Warm weather Apr-Sept | |
| fermentation period: | 4 | weeks per bin | 2 | weeks per bin |
| max cap. qty bear bins: | 0.89 | bear bin(s)/day | 1.75 | bear bin(s)/day |
| max lbs per day | 129.05 | lbs/day | 253.75 | lbs/day |
| max lbs per week | 903.35 | lbs/week | 1776.25 | lbs/week |

** Bear bin = bokashi fermentation containers (airtight 20-gallon containers).
Max capacities are determined by the number of bear bins and how long each bear bin is unavailable while its contents (food waste) are fermenting (4 weeks during cold weather, 2 weeks during warm weather).

It doesn't make sense that we are not on DOS's pickup route. We handle far more than 3 buildings worth of waste. We were going through 2 bear bins every two days without the pick up from DOS. These are 50 gallon containers that hold as much as a brown bin. We have 15 of these bins. They need to be continually emptied to make room for more compost. We are running out of space to trench this waste. It is more than the involved volunteers can handle. Stuyvesant Town is two blocks away and has pickup. We continually beg for this service to help the city achieve it's environmental responsibilities. We are already doing unpaid work as volunteers that is instrumental to achieving the zero waste goal of 2030. How is this goal going to be realized if the city continues to ignore us and not faction in what is needed to keep an instrumental resource in a densely populated area like the East Village functioning?

PLEASE FINANCE THE DEPARTMENT OF SANITATION'S COMPOSTING PROGRAM AND PUT US ON THEIR PICKUP ROUTE!

Sincerely,
Lorraine Forte

6/15/22

Dear Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management.

I am pleased to testify that I LOVE composting in NYC. My neighborhood, Sunset Park Brooklyn, is one of the FEW lucky communities to be including currently in composting program hosted by NYC Sanitation. Composting needs to be mandatory, not voluntary. We, as we all know, are facing an environmental crisis of epic proportion. NYC can and should be a leader in climate action. We can remove up to 1/3 of our waste stream via composting. It is insane that we are not already on board to do this. My trash is reduced by an incredible volume via composting. The brown bins are awesome with NO uptick in rodents, vermin or smells with proper use. I let my neighbors use my bin (their landlord has not voluntarily opted in to the compost program.) . I use the resulting compost produced by our community (I picked up my bags of completed compost at the farmers market) in our tree pits to help our city trees. Please move BACK to mandatory composting. It just makes sense.

If you have any questions I can be reached at

Sincerely,

Lynn Tondrick

47th street Brooklyn, NY 11220

Marc Shifflett
5th Avenue
New York, NY 10035

Dear committee members and the public,

Well, I have to begin by saying “words can’t...” If there’s a sitting committee member, elected or appointed government official listening or reading, who doesn’t understand the critical importance of reducing our waste streams and managing them as resource streams is not paying attention.

Zero Waste means many things to many people. To me it means no residential or commercial waste shall be buried or burned. Period. This pretty much defines parameters. Eliminate greenhouse gasses via landfill and incineration. Done. Now, let’s move on to some of the nitty gritty of how to begin addressing zero waste.

Data collection and analysis will play an enormous role in characterizing our resource streams for diversion in order to meet the cities carbon reduction commitments and zero waste goals. It’s imperative this data is openly shared in near-realtime and the compliance mechanisms in place to ensure unfettered access under the NYC Open Data Law. This will give citizens the ability to participate in creating new tools and platforms to track, reduce and eliminate the unrecyclable and improve the quality of life in their neighborhoods.

EPR (Extended Producer Responsibility) ([A10185](#), Englebright) and the **Expanded Bottle Bill** ([A8668A](#)) are two key pieces of legislation at the state level that will directly impact zero waste initiatives in NYC. EPR and the Expanded Bottle Bill will reduce our overall plastic waste footprint as well as removing other forms of novel and toxic packaging introduced upstream. This is the waste that places the greatest burden on our rivers and oceans, as well as the economic health of cities and municipalities.

I conclude by humbly recognizing the often understated moral component to these discussions around zero waste. We are the only stewards. Yet in our stewardship we ship our disposable wealth, our toxic waste, to poor and underserved communities that are left to contend with the environment and health consequences of our waste. The Covanta incinerator in Newark’s Ironbound is one such community but there are others in NY and elsewhere around the US. The threat our waste poses to global climate security is clear and unequivocal.

This makes me both angry and sad. The question is do you feel the same?

Respectfully,

Marc Shifflett

(I’m a Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board member, Chair of the IT Committee. The views expressed in this testimony are my own and may not be shared by the full board.)

6/18/2022

SEND TO: testimony@council.nyc.gov

SUBJECT: 6/15 Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management Hearing - Written Testimony

FOR – with recommendations

Int 0244-2022, Int 0280-2022, Int 0281-2022, Int 0274-2022, Int 0275-2022

From:

Marion Yuen

Ave H, , Brooklyn, NY 11230

Email: myuen@pipeline.com

Chairperson CM Sandy Nurse and Other CMs,

Thank you for putting together this package of much-needed bills.

In particular, I applaud and urge you to demand that DSNY provide outreach & education and report to the City Council.

This is what I want to contribute to the deliberations around this package of bills.

These bills will pass, given the support from cosponsors and the public.

The **MOST CRITICAL** factor for the bills' success in implementation is DSNY.

For the sake of a more livable city and planet, DSNY's organizational inertia and the modus operandi of its administrative-policy-planning staff **MUST CHANGE**.

The **CENTRAL ISSUE** is DSNY's approach to humans and its disregard for relationships among people.

Look at DSNY's record.

Just before the 2020 shutdown of all food-scrap pickup and dropoff (due to the COVID crisis), DSNY's efforts produced just a little over 3,000 multifamily apartment buildings participating in curbside food-scrap pickup in the entire city. DSNY's outreach & education programs have not worked and **more of the same will not work**, regardless of mandates.

There has been much accomplished in the mandated program for "regular" recyclables. Yet, in my apartment building, the super routinely recycles used shipment boxes (as large 3' x 3' x 3') intact – without flattening the cardboard. This approach uses up more truck space and therefore, more gas used and more carbon emissions. Further, the super puts such a used box in a clean new thick-grade plastic bag – more waste, more use of hydrocarbons!

This is an example of how and why DSNY's outreach & education MUST change to consider the mindsets and real situations of the many participants in residential waste collection.

In specifying and providing oversight on DSNY, its education & outreach programs and its reporting, kindly consider these questions:

- Does DSNY consider residents, building service staff, ratepayers and taxpayers as **Real Human Beings** and **Customers**?
- Does DSNY recognize that Real Human Beings have **relationships and social conditions** that we live with & in?
- Does DSNY recognize the various **relationships associated with property ownership**, that is the role of landlords and property owners vis-a-vis the lives of tenants?
- Does DSNY understand that **passionate-activist recyclers-composters** will continue to help drive a mandated program as they have the volunteer programs?
 - Does DSNY respect and support the many passionate-activist recyclers-composters who voluntarily do what DSNY is paid to do with tax monies?
 - Can DSNY show some appreciation vs. its current approach?
- When is a matter a **policy matter or dictates** of a DSNY administrative staff person?
 - How can there be open, transparent accountability and real direct communications vs. circular emails, too busy to talk ...?
- Will DSNY **meet customers, NYC residents, where we are at**?

I sincerely hope you will add sections to the various bills that address oversight of DSNY wrt the above questions as well as parameters for DSNY's rulemaking.

- How can there be transparency, public input and City Council oversight of DSNY's rulemaking?

I suggest that you introduce a bill to focus on oversight of DSNY's operations and rulemaking.

Thank you for reading this.

Sincerely,

Marion Yuen

From: Michele Greenberg <michele.greenberg@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 16, 2022 2:30 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] In Support of a Zero Waste Future

My name is Michele Greenberg and I am testifying from Brooklyn. I'm here today to testify in support of the five pieces of legislation being heard at today's committee hearing. The Zero Waste package, led by Council Members Hanif, Powers, and Nurse are essential to meeting our city's goal of Zero Waste by 2030.

Every year, our city generates 3.2 million tons of trash, the most of any city in the United States. The vast majority of this waste is sent to landfills up and down the East Coast where it sits and rots. A third of that waste is organic material that when it decomposes releases methane, a greenhouse gas that is more than 25 times more destructive than carbon dioxide. By passing the Zero Waste package in front of the committee today, our City can take real and meaningful steps to reduce our carbon footprint and get our City on track to send zero waste to landfills by 2030.

We are a family who have participated in composting for many years in a local community garden, then we put our organic waste in brown bins when we were "lucky" enough to be included in the curbside composting program and then we brought our waste to a local drop off site when the program was put on pause. We went from having stinky bags of garbage that filled up and needed to be put out twice a week to putting out our trash once every two weeks if that. I feel strongly that no family should have to be lucky to have their compost picked up! According to a survey done by Comptroller Landers, over 60% of people in NYC would like to be able to compost their food and garden waste. If that were to happen and with only a minimal amount of education and special equipment, every person in this city would be able to do their part to help turn around the climate crisis we are currently experiencing. I am very excited by the prospect of these bills becoming law because New York City, as the biggest city in the country, will have the chance to make a huge positive impact on slowing down climate change.

In 1996, San Francisco became the first U.S. city to establish a citywide food composting program, and achieved the state's goal of 50 percent landfill diversion just 4 years later. Right now, that city composts and recycles about 80 percent of its waste. Granted that San Francisco is different from NYC but if you translate that recycling and composting percentage to NYC numbers, it would mean that we would be able to divert 2.56 million tons of trash from landfills each year!! That would reduce the amount of methane this

city's trash releases by an astronomical amount. We would be able to do this by investing primarily in education and people power rather than costly trucking and shipping to expensive landfills. And finally, we would have the chance to lead as a world class city that transitioned from one which was sending more trash to landfills than any other in the U.S, (and thereby contributing massively to the current climate crisis), to one that would be DIVERTING more trash from landfills than any other city! I propose that this would give NYC the opportunity to become a role model for the country and the world. This will allow us to positively impact not only the climate crisis but the health and wellbeing of many communities of color. Expanding our composting program will also create thousands of well paid green union jobs for our City.

Additionally, the Zero Waste mandating and reporting legislation will provide concrete goals and benchmarks for our City to meet in our journey to Zero Waste. With just eight years until 2030, we need strong Council oversight to ensure our City is taking action to reduce our waste footprint.

Thank you for letting me testify before this committee. The Climate crisis is already negatively impacting millions of lives here and across the globe. Our grandchildren and great grandchildren may not have a place to live if we don't act now. The Zero Waste package including mandatory residential curbside compost collection is a do-able program that gives every New Yorker the chance to play a part in changing the progress of climate change in a direction that will allow future generations to survive. I urge this committee to pass this Zero Waste package without delay!

--

Michele Greenberg

From: Michelle Nadboy <mnadboy@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 16, 2022 7:22 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Composting

Hearing Information

Who: New York City Council Committee on Sanitation

When: Monday, June 15 at 12:00 Pm

How to sign up to testify live via video conferencing: **Please register at <https://council.nyc.gov/testify/> at least 24 hours before the hearing.** Each person who intends on testifying live should register separately. Persons who do not register in advance will not be permitted to testify live via video conferencing. Choose your preferred method of testimony: via web (zoom), via phone, or submit online testimony (written testimony). Select the hearing "Wed, June 15 @ 12:00 APM - Committee on Sanitation," and include Subject of Testimony such as "In Support Of A Zero Waste Future."

How to provide written testimony: Written testimony may be submitted without registration by emailing it to testimony@council.nyc.gov or via our website at <https://council.nyc.gov/testify/> **up to 72 hours after the close of the hearing.**

My name is michelle nadboy and I am testifying from Brooklyn. I'm here today to testify in support of the five pieces of legislation being heard at today's committee hearing. The Zero Waste package, led by Council Members Hanif, Powers, and Nurse are essential to our City meeting our goal of Zero Waste by 2030.

Every year, our City generates 3.2 million tons of trash, the most of any City in the United States. The vast majority of this waste is sent to landfills up and down the East Coast where it sits and rots. Many of these landfills are located near communities of color and have for decades caused chronic health problems in those communities. Furthermore, a third of that waste is organic material that when it decomposes releases methane, a greenhouse gas that is more than 25 times more destructive than Carbon Dioxide. By passing the Zero Waste package in front of the committee today, our City can take real and meaningful steps to reduce our carbon footprint and get our City on track to send zero waste to landfill

--

Kind Regards,

Michelle Nadboy

[LinkedIn](#)

From: Mimi Bluestone <mimiblue@mac.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 16, 2022 3:52 PM
To: Testimony
Cc: District35
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Zero Waste Package: Intro 0244, 1942, 0274, 0275

To the New York City Council Committee on Sanitation,

I'm a retired NYC high school teacher, a Brooklynite, and a dedicated composter. Why do I compost? It saves money., protects the climate, helps suppress the rat population, and goes a long way to helping the city meet its goal of Zero Waste by 2030, a mere eight years from now

It is simply common sense to pass the five pieces of legislation in the Zero Waste package proposed by Council Members Hanif, Nurse and Powers. Of the 3.2 million tons of trash the city generates daily, one-third is compostable food waste. Most of it is sent to landfills where it releases methane, a greenhouse gas that's more than 25 times more damaging to the climate than carbon dioxide These landfills are usually near poor communities and communities of color and cause chronic illness in those areas.

Mandatory residential composting and the CORE act will ensure that we New Yorkers can reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and come closer to meeting our Zero Waste goals. I urge you to support Intro 0244 to create a curbside organics program for residential buildings; Intro 0274 to require the city administration to meet citywide waste diversion goals by 2030; Intro 0275 to require the Department of Sanitation to report on the city's progress toward Zero Waste going to landfill by 2030; and Intro 1942 to require DSNY to establish and operate at least three organics drop-off sites in each community district.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Mimi Bluestone
Brooklyn 12238

Nicolas Shearman

Nicolas.Shearman |

June 15, 2022

New York City Council
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

RE: N. Shearman Testimony on Intros 0244-2022, 0274-2022, 0275-2022, 0280-2022, & 0281-2022

Dear Speaker Adams, Chair Nurse, Committee Members, Council Members, and Staff,

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

My name is Nicolas Shearman, I'm a resident of Astoria at 3608 28th Avenue, Astoria, NY, 11103. I'm proud to live in Queens for four years now and am a lifelong resident of New York state from Long Island and the Hudson Valley.

Today I testify in support of all five intros on the Committee's agenda. I applaud the Council for embracing universal composting, zero waste by 2030, a goal of zero waste to landfill, community recycling centers, and organic waste drop off sites.

I urge the Council to swiftly pass these bills into law to help clean our City and recover from the pandemic. In addition to supporting this legislation, I would like to share my support for additional legislative action by the Council due to the dire state of the City's streets since the start of the pandemic.

When I moved to Astoria in 2019, I was impressed by how clean the streets were. Yes, there were some problem areas on commercial avenues, but most of the streets were clean, allowing community members to enjoy the beauty of Astoria's buildings, street trees, and front gardens to shine.

We of course know that the public realm, including our streets, changed drastically in 2020. Once it was safe to leave our homes and go outside, I increased my usual habit of walking in the neighborhood to walk every day for fresh air and to keep my mind healthy. I was saddened, however, by how filthy many of the streets had become with debris from residential garbage bags. I knew this was related to sanitation budget cuts, but it also became clear the City's archaic system of not containerizing its waste is not working. On my walks where I was trying to clear my head and survive the pandemic, I encountered trash not picked up, trash bags ripped open by rats with trash strewn on the sidewalks, and trash in the street gutter. This was especially bad after garbage or recycling days because the bags of waste had just been left on the street until pickup. I've learned from reporting on WNYC and Streetsblog that our current plastic bag on the sidewalk system goes back to the chemical industry's donation of bags to the City during a sanitation worker strike. This system is not working.

Also, ever last one of the City's old school wire litter baskets with no top need to be eliminated across the city and replaced with the long-awaited Better Bin rat-proof bin. The wire baskets continue to let waste fly as they have always done. New York is a windy city despite being the Big Apple, but our choices in litter baskets on commercial streets doesn't reflect that reality- waste piles up and flies out of these baskets, or sometimes the wind pulls the entire plastic bag out of the basket altogether.

Inspired by Proud Astorian, a group of Astorians who started cleaning the neighborhood's street during the pandemic because our City's municipal trash pickup system had basically failed, I made a personal resolution to start picking up trash as a way to help our City. I started to carry my landlord's broom and dustpan and an empty garbage bag with me on my walks. Some of the frequent items I find on the sidewalk are paper products, plastic wrappers, chip bags, crushed cans, plastic bottles, bottle caps, floss sticks, wrappers of cigarette boxes, dog feces,

Nicolas Shearman

Nicolas.Shearman@parks.nyc.gov | (631) 834-0643

used masks, black plastic bags from bodegas and liquor stores, beer bottles, take out containers, plastic straws, plastic utensils, coffee cups and lids, and liquor bottles. I pick up waste like this on a ten block stretch of 28th avenue several times a week on sidewalks, the street gutter, and street tree pits. This trash pickup is like a game of wack-a-mole, with little improvement in sight. I continued to compost my food scraps and bring my household's food waste to a drop off site run by Astoria Pug and Big Reuse despite years of threatened budget cuts. I say this all not to give a pat on my back, but to make you aware that the City is very much failing to solve what is really a crisis of waste management in this city.

Although landlords are supposed to sweep their sidewalk and curbs, despite many 311 complaints I have made throughout the City this regulation appears to be a joke. Several of my 311 requests for sidewalks covered in trash were deemed non-substantiated despite the landlord not correcting the dirty conditions. We need the City to crack down on this and also fund regular municipal sweeping of sidewalks, not just streets.

I am embarrassed to bring family and friends over to my apartment building, because our avenue is so often dirty with trash. Every time I have a friend over, I clean the front of our building to remove the trash, so it doesn't look like we're living in filth. No New Yorker in any neighborhood of this city should be living like this. New Yorkers pay thousands every month to afford living this City, the bare minimum we should get from our government is clean streets. I'm tired of the culture we have in NYC that our City is too big and gritty to be clean- we just need to be smart about program development, implementation, partnership building, and sufficient investing.

I urge the City Council to expand pass additional sanitation bills to reduce or ban the sale of certain single use plastics in this city, launch a citywide anti littering campaign, encourage use of reusable water bottles and coffee cups at cafes, ban non-compostable bags at restaurants and bodegas, and pass a bill to mandate containerization of all residential waste pickup. There are cities across the world mandating residential buildings to dispose their trash in containers organized by waste type- there is no reason we should not be doing this in NYC. This is a quality of life, environmental justice, and ecological issue. Also, please pass a resolution supporting Extended Producer Responsibility at the state level, specifically Assembly Bill A10185, to help reduce packaging waste in New York.

The expansion and funding of the City's clean curb pilot is encouraging, but the implementation is way too slow for the scale of our sanitation crisis. The City Council and Mayor should create and fund a comprehensive capital plan in the next budget to finance the installation of clean curb and container infrastructure for collection of residential waste across the City. Design solutions should match the neighborhood context and density. Existing sanitation trucks should be retrofitted to pick up these containers. All street sweepers should also be modernized to have vacuum technology to improve upon the existing mechanical broom vehicles.

We have the power to make New York the cleanest and greenest big city in the country. I look forward to seeing all you do as a Council to realize this vision. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Nicolas Shearman
Astoria, NY resident

P.S. for transparency purposes, I'd like to note that I am an employee of NYC Parks. I provide this testimony as a resident of NYC, not as an employee before the Council. I plan to deliver this testimony during my lunch break.

From: Paula Krauss <pfkrauss@att.net>
Sent: Saturday, June 18, 2022 7:25 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter in Support of the Zero Waste Package

My name is Paula Krauss and I am testifying from Union Square, Manhattan. I'm writing today to testify in support of the five pieces of legislation heard at the June 15th committee hearing. The Zero Waste package, led by Council Members Hanif, Powers, and Nurse are essential to our City meeting our goal of Zero Waste by 2030.

Every year, our City generates 3.2 million tons of trash, the most of any City in the United States. The vast majority of this waste is sent to landfills up and down the East Coast where it sits and rots. Many of these landfills are located near communities of color and have for decades caused chronic health problems in those communities. Furthermore, a third of that waste is organic material that when it decomposes releases methane, a greenhouse gas that is more than 25 times more destructive than Carbon Dioxide. By passing the Zero Waste package in front of the committee today, our City can take real and meaningful steps to reduce our carbon footprint and get our City on track to send zero waste to landfills by 2030.

With mandatory residential composting and the CORE act, we can ensure that New Yorkers have every opportunity to effectively dispose of their organic waste. Composting will not just reduce greenhouse gases, it creates an amazing byproduct that strengthens our soil and helps farmers across our state. An expanded composting program will also create thousands of good paying green union jobs for our City!

Additionally, the Zero Waste mandating and reporting legislation will provide concrete goals and benchmarks for our City to meet in our journey to Zero Waste. With just eight years until 2030, we need strong Council oversight to ensure our City is taking action to reduce our waste footprint.

Thank you for letting me testify before this committee. Climate change is a very real threat that demands immediate action from every level of government in every place across the globe. I urge this committee to pass this Zero Waste package.

Paula Krauss

Sent from my iPad

Phebe Pierson
June 4, 2022

Testimony for City Council Hearing 6/15/22
Committee on Solid Waste Management

Dear City Council,

I am a lifelong New Yorker and a resident of Harlem, and I am writing to you in support of the following bills:

- Residential curbside organics collection (Int 0244-2022)
- Establishing a goal of zero waste for NYC by 2030 (Int 0274-2022)
- Goal of zero waste to landfill (Int 0275-2022)
- Community recycling centers (Int 0280-2022)
- Organic waste drop-off sites (Int 0281-2022)

With regards to the bills increasing access for NYC residents to have their organics collected (0244 and 0281), I want to point out that composting is a net positive overall, for the city, New Yorkers, and of course our surrounding environment. I worked at GrowNYC for five years and saw firsthand how **empowering** it was for New Yorkers of all kinds to be able to contribute to the health of our ecosystems in this small but significant way. People love composting. Composting also diverts huge amounts of waste from landfills, **decreasing the amount of the greenhouse gas methane** that is released into the air.

When it's finished and added to soil, compost increases the amount of water that can be held by soil, which is a huge benefit for places like NYC where we have so much hardscaping. In this way, **adding compost to our parks, tree pits, and community gardens can help mitigate the city's combined sewage overflow issues, because it will decrease the amount of water that goes into the sewer system during storms.** It can help protect New Yorkers' homes in situations where they might otherwise flood due to a storm surge. **I urge you to make composting as accessible as possible for New Yorkers; it will benefit everyone.**

I believe it is our responsibility as the greatest city in the world to lead the charge on climate change. We need to be accountable for the goals we set, and we need to do everything possible to meet them. We need Sanitation to report on where we are on our 0x30 goal; we need to renew our efforts to recycle everything possible to divert that waste from landfills; we need to educate and encourage New Yorkers to be active participants in these goals, which they will be more likely to do if they have faith that their leaders are on board supporting them.

Thank you for reading and considering my testimony, I hope you will take these issues seriously.

Sincerely,

Phebe Pierson
Manhattan Ave
New York, NY 10026

Rachel Becker
June 10, 2022

Testimony for City Council Hearing 6/15/22
Committee on Solid Waste Management

Dear City Council,

I am a longtime New Yorker and a new homeowner in Ridgewood, and I am writing to you in support of the following bills:

- Residential curbside organics collection (Int 0244-2022)
- Establishing a goal of zero waste for NYC by 2030 (Int 0274-2022)
- Goal of zero waste to landfill (Int 0275-2022)
- Community recycling centers (Int 0280-2022)
- Organic waste drop-off sites (Int 0281-2022)

With regards to the bills increasing access for NYC residents to have their organics collected (0244 and 0281), I want to point out that composting is a net positive overall, for the city, New Yorkers, and of course our surrounding environment. Composting diverts huge amounts of waste from landfills, **decreasing the amount of the greenhouse gas methane** that is released into the air, and reducing cost to the city.

When it's finished and added to soil, compost increases the amount of water that can be held by soil, which is a huge benefit for places like NYC where we have so much hardscaping. In this way, **adding compost to our parks, tree pits, and community gardens can help mitigate the city's combined sewage overflow issues, because it will decrease the amount of water that goes into the sewer system during storms.** It can help protect New Yorkers' homes in situations where they might otherwise flood due to a storm surge. **I urge you to make composting as accessible as possible for New Yorkers; it will benefit everyone.**

I believe it is our responsibility as the greatest city in the world to lead the charge on climate change. We need to be accountable for the goals we set, and we need to do everything possible to meet them. We should be making it easy for New Yorkers to be active participants in these goals. One of the reasons I was excited to buy in Ridgewood was the curbside composting program, and it was a real disappointment to find that this was a cut during the pandemic. I sincerely hope it will be reinstated and fully supported.

Thank you for reading and considering my testimony, I hope you will take these issues seriously.

Sincerely,

Rachel Becker
Gates Ave
Ridgewood, NY 11385

From: Rachel Youens <rachelyouens@verizon.net>
Sent: Saturday, June 18, 2022 9:34 AM
To: Testimony
Cc: District45
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Zero Waste Package, public comment

My name is Rachel Youens and I am testifying from south Brooklyn. I'm writing today to testify in support of the five pieces of legislation heard at the June 15th committee hearing. The Zero Waste package, led by Council Members Hanif, Powers, and Nurse are essential to our City meeting our goal of Zero Waste by 2030. I will be looking for your vote on this, as it impacts my immediate neighborhood, as well as the city and the state at large.

Every year, our City generates 3.2 million tons of trash, the most of any City in the United States. The vast majority of this waste is sent to landfills up and down the East Coast where it sits and rots. Many of these landfills are located near communities of color and have for decades caused chronic health problems in those communities. Furthermore, a third of that waste is organic material that when it decomposes releases methane, a greenhouse gas that is more than 25 times more destructive than Carbon Dioxide. By passing the Zero Waste package in front of the committee today, our City can take real and meaningful steps to reduce our carbon footprint and get our City on track to send zero waste to landfills by 2030.

With mandatory residential composting and the CORE act, we can ensure that New Yorkers have every opportunity to effectively dispose of their organic waste. Composting will not just reduce greenhouse gases, it creates an amazing byproduct that strengthens our soil and helps farmers across our state. An expanded composting program will also create thousands of good paying green union jobs for our City!

Additionally, the Zero Waste mandating and reporting legislation will provide concrete goals and benchmarks for our City to meet in our journey to Zero Waste. With just eight years until 2030, we need strong Council oversight to ensure our City is taking action to reduce our waste footprint.

Thank you for letting me testify before this committee. Climate change is a very real threat that demands immediate action from every level of government in every place across the globe. I urge this committee to pass this Zero Waste package.

Sincerely,
Rachel Youens

My name is Rebecca and I live in Manhattan. I'm writing in support of the five pieces of legislation that were being considered at the 12:00pm, June 15, 2022 NYC Council Committee on Sanitation hearing. The bills in the Zero Waste package, led by Council Members Hanif, Powers, and Nurse, are essential to meeting our City's goal of Zero Waste by 2030, as well as our critical climate goals.

I'm writing to you as a young person, a recent college graduate with a degree in environmental studies, and someone who is incredibly concerned about the climate crisis.

I am a lifelong resident of the NY Metro area. I grew up in Westchester County, and over the past decade, my community has been heavily impacted by extreme weather events, namely flooding, hurricanes and tropical storms. Hurricane Ida devastated my town this past September, with flash floods wiping out businesses and homes, causing millions of dollars in damages. My family's house sustained significant damage with over three feet of water, requiring a new heating system and appliances.

I know that climate change is making these storms more likely in our area and more damaging – I've experienced these impacts firsthand. We need to be doing everything we can to mitigate our greenhouse gas emissions and avoid the worst impacts of the climate crisis.

Reducing food waste is one incredibly effective and achievable way to combat the climate crisis.

Every year, New York City generates 3.2 million tons of trash, the most of any city in the United States. One third of that waste is made up of organic material that releases methane when it decomposes anaerobically (as it does in landfills). Methane is a potent greenhouse gas, 25 times more effective at trapping heat than carbon dioxide. Diverting food and organic waste from landfills through composting is a necessary step towards reducing methane emissions and reducing our overall contributions to climate change. By passing this Zero Waste package, New York City can take real and meaningful steps to reduce our greenhouse gas contributions and get our City on track to send zero waste to landfills by 2030.

With mandatory residential composting and the CORE act, we will ensure that New Yorkers have ample opportunity to effectively dispose of their organic waste. I currently compost and make the effort to bring my own food waste to a drop off station. But many people do not have extra time in their schedules to do so and would really benefit from a curbside organics program, as proposed in the Hanif Bill Intro 0244. A curbside system benefits from the fact that New Yorkers are used to curbside trash and recycling pickup, and can more easily integrate compost into their regular routine. Not only that, but a curbside program signals to residents that the City prioritizes composting, providing an incentive to learn about the process and begin composting themselves.

In addition to reducing greenhouse gas emissions released from food sitting in landfills, composting creates a valuable byproduct that strengthens our soil, helps farmers across our state, and serves as a powerful climate resilience resource through water management. An expanded composting program will also create thousands of good paying green union jobs for our City. During the increasingly hot summer months, composting will lessen the strong odors produced by rotting food and will help improve the cleanliness of the City as a whole.

Composting is also a necessary environmental justice initiative. Landfills are often located in or near low-income communities and communities of color, causing chronic health problems and exacerbating already-existing vulnerabilities in these populations. Reducing the amount of waste we send to landfills through composting will help address environmental injustice and improve health outcomes for these communities.

The Zero Waste mandating and reporting legislation will provide concrete goals and benchmarks for our City to meet as we move to a Zero Waste future. With just eight years until 2030, we need strong Council oversight to ensure our City is taking action to reduce our waste footprint.

Climate change is a very real threat that demands immediate action from every level of government everywhere across the planet. We need committed action to address this crisis now – our youngest generations are counting on us to make the necessary changes to build a livable world. I am strongly urging the committee to pass this Zero Waste package. It will be a win for our livelihoods, a win for the environment, and a win for our future.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments to this committee.

To: Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management of the New York City Council
Good afternoon Madame Chairperson Nurse and Committee Members.

My name is Ronald J. Weiss. I am a longtime resident of Park Slope, Brooklyn. While I am here today in my individual capacity, I am also the Secretary and a member of the Board of Trustees of the Park Slope Civic Council. While the Civic Council does not yet have a formal position on mandatory curbside composting, in our fall 2021 newsletter (“Civic News”) we ran a front page article on the City’s composting program and urged our readers to participate in it.

Park Slope, as you may know, is a neighborhood that is participating in curbside collection. I understand that it is one of the most active neighborhoods. Nonetheless, looking down my block on Sunday evening when I put out my brown bin I am disappointed by the relatively small number of bins I see.

Our collective goal should be how to increase this.

For the last 22 years I have been fortunate enough to live where I have had access to a small backyard. As I tried my hand at gardening, I quickly learned how poor the quality of the soil was. The type of soil that the glacier left here was not kind to us. At about the same time I began gardening the City introduced a program in conjunction with the BBG where for a small fee – my recollection is \$20 or \$25 – you could purchase a compost bin called a Garden Gourmet. It is the bin I still use today.

Encouraging more people to become backyard composters would not only be good for the gardens but would remove that much more waste from what the City would need to collect.

Commissioner Tisch stated that >50% of New Yorkers have never engaged in organic recycling. Increasing that number combined with increased education and giving incentives for backyard composting – whether through providing discounted bins or educational programs –

should not only result in greater participation in curbside composting but would also have the benefit of reducing the waste that the City would otherwise need to deal with.

People who are unfamiliar with backyard composting will sometimes say it smells. If done correctly – which is not hard to do – it does not smell. It actually smells like a forest floor, since what you are doing is what the forest does – just much faster. Also, if you do it correctly, you will not attract vermin. It does not, and in the 20 plus years I have been doing this, I have never had this issue.

And if any of you would like a sample of the end product I produce, I would be pleased to send it to you.

And one suggestion. When the program was originally introduced, curbside collection of organics was on the same day as one of the regular trash pickups. Since it was reintroduced it has been off-cycle. Undoubtedly having one's organics pickup the same day as your regular trash/recyclables pickup would result in greater participation in the curbside organics pickup program, particularly so once it becomes mandatory for residential properties.

Respectfully submitted,

Ronald J. Weiss
1st Street
Brooklyn, NY 11215

I write in support of Intro-244. I have been gathering my compost in my apartment and dropping it off for years, but would love the convenience of placing it in my own apartment building (in East Harlem). However, I'm even more excited about how much more widely composting would be adopted if mandated with brown bins in all buildings. This would help us avoid greenhouse gas emissions due to the actual landfill decay of our organic materials as well as by reducing the emissions from the long-distance hauling that our huge amount of trash requires. This would help NYC develop toward our climate goals and let us continue as leaders in the fight against climate change, which threatens New Yorkers greatly.

Ross Pinkerton

June 15, 2022

Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony. My name is Sara Gronim and I live in Brooklyn. I am testifying in support of the collection of City Council bills that further a zero-waste future for New York City.

My family has recycled our organic waste for years. We put our food scraps in 1-lb yogurt containers, which we store in the freezer, and then take them to our local farmers market, which is 5 blocks from where we live.. When Covid hit and Grow NY shut down operations, it was pretty difficult to patch together places to take our food scraps. Different community gardens had different operating days and hours, and we sometimes walked as far as two miles to leave off our organic waste. This was a very real experience of inaccessibility, which is a problem these laws seek to correct.

I go to the trouble of traveling to compost for two reasons. One is that I know that organic waste turned into compost makes for sustainably healthy soil, and healthy soil is essential to all forms of life. And the other is that organic waste left to rot in landfills or burned in incinerators yields methane, a greenhouse gas that is 84 times more powerful in heating the planet than carbon dioxide. If we are going to have any future at all, we need to rapidly and completely stop emitting greenhouse gasses, and ensuring that organic waste is returned to the agricultural cycle is a vital component of that.

I assume you all know of New York State's landmark Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, passed in 2019. It is now law that, by 2050, NYS in its entirety, across all sectors, will emit at least 85% fewer greenhouse gasses than we did in 1990. The CLCPA required that a Climate Action Council be appointed to lay out the steps we need to reach that goal. The recently released draft of its plan points out that, while 23% of our waste stream is organic materials, those organics are responsible for 78% of the greenhouse gas emissions attributable to waste in New York State. The Climate Justice Working Group of the Climate Action Council says, "ending the disposal of food scraps and yard waste at landfills and incinerators is probably the most important action the State can take to cut emissions from this sector."

Universal residential organics collection, drop off sites in every community board, and documenting real progress towards a genuine zero-waste future for us all—I urge the City Council to pass these bills.

Thank you.

Sara S. Gronim
Prospect Park West
Brooklyn, NY 11215

sgronim@erols.com

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to urge the council to support the Universal Composting Bill intro #244.

I am a homeowner, mother and a small business owner in Brooklyn, NY. Every day I see the environmental damage, waste and sanitary issues that arise from not having universal composting in our community.

New York City has a giant waste problem. Our city alone produces 11 million tons - almost 15%! - of the United States' total waste, 50% of which is compostable. When this waste is *not* composted, it ends up in landfills, where it breaks down anaerobically, releasing methane (CH₄) into the atmosphere and accelerating global warming. According to the Environmental Defense Fund, Methane gas has a Global Warming Potential 80x greater than that of carbon dioxide (CO₂). So, while most people associate global warming with extreme rises in CO₂ levels, methane also plays a major role, especially in the first 20 years after it is released, and we are already seeing these impacts in the form of extreme weather: record-breaking temperatures and more deadly tornadoes and hurricanes. By reducing these emissions we can hopefully prevent even more extreme impacts.

In this Climate Emergency, with methane levels increasing at record rates, there are other steps we must take to reduce some of the most catastrophic effects of global warming.

A solution as simple as the mandated citywide collection and management of food scraps could help contain runaway emission levels and curtail more lethal damage and destruction, among other benefits. According to the Composting Council, if everyone in the United States composted all of their food waste, the impact would be equivalent to removing 7.8 million cars from the road. If we accept the emissions targets set out by law in the CLCPA, universal composting must be viewed as an urgent necessity.

Composting will save New York City money. According to an April 2022 report by New York City's Independent Budget Office (IBO) the costs for "collecting and disposing of the refuse, recycling, and organics" would initially rise about \$39 million in the first three years

of universal composting, up from a total of \$775 million in 2019...**But those costs would even out in the fourth year and then result in savings of about \$33 million per year after that, the IBO said.**

Composting will NOT increase the rat population! In fact it's the opposite: isolating food scraps from trash is viewed by many as a vermin mitigation strategy! Just like other waste disposal methods, the composting process must be managed. Often the strongest advocates for universal composting are skeptics who have finally tried the practice for themselves. As one commenter on a recent Op-Ed said: "--the food waste doesn't smell. And neither does the rest of the garbage, because the food waste isn't in it. And there are no bags with food waste on the sidewalk for rats and raccoons to break into".

This year with rat populations out of control it is urgent more than ever to start implementing a universal composting policy for all NYC residents.

While I know how important it is, many of my neighbors do not. Educating New Yorkers about how composting can improve their quality of life has never been more important.

If we care about this city and its vibrant communities, we need to move to universal composting as soon as possible.

Thank you for your time,

Sari Carel

From: S F <szforbes@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 16, 2022 10:06 AM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Composting especially Bed Stuy Brooklyn

My name is SForbes and I am testifying from Bedford Stuyvesant in Brooklyn. I'm here today to testify in support of the five pieces of legislation being heard at today's committee hearing. The Zero Waste package, led by Council Members Hanif, Powers, and Nurse are essential to our City meeting our goal of Zero Waste by 2030.

Every year, our City generates 3.2 million tons of trash, the most of any City in the United States. The vast majority of this waste is sent to landfills up and down the East Coast where it sits and rots. Many of these landfills are located near communities of color and have for decades caused chronic health problems in those communities. Furthermore, a third of that waste is organic material that when it decomposes releases methane, a greenhouse gas that is more than 25 times more destructive than Carbon Dioxide. By passing the Zero Waste package in front of the committee today, our City can take real and meaningful steps to reduce our carbon footprint and get our City on track to send zero waste to landfills by 2030.

With mandatory residential composting and the CORE act, we can ensure that New Yorkers have every opportunity to effectively dispose of their organic waste. Composting will not just reduce greenhouse gases, it creates an amazing byproduct that strengthens our soil and helps farmers across our state. An expanded composting program will also create thousands of good paying green union jobs for our City!

Additionally, the Zero Waste mandating and reporting legislation will provide concrete goals and benchmarks for our City to meet in our journey to Zero Waste. With just eight years until 2030, we need strong Council oversight to ensure our City is taking action to reduce our waste footprint. Thank you for letting me testify before this committee. Climate change is a very real threat that demands immediate action from every level of government in every place across the globe. I urge this committee to pass this Zero Waste package.

Best,
SForbes

My name is Sharon Waskow. I am the founder and co-leader of It's Easy Being Green, an UWS neighborhood climate education and personal action group. I am testifying today in support of Intro0244-2022, the bill which sets a deadline for mandatory composting in residential buildings. Thank you to Council Member Hanif for introducing it and to my council member Gale Brewer and the other co-sponsors.

For 4 years a team of It's Easy Being Green members has worked in our neighborhood to encourage residential participation in Curbside composting. We have presented at street fairs, spoken at the meetings of individual coop boards, held lobby information presentations and written about it extensively in our monthly newsletter. I feel strongly about this issue because it is one of the few personal actions that can have a direct effect on CO2 emissions and contribute to New York City's 2030 goals for carbon reduction. If we expand curbside composting and make it mandatory for all New Yorkers we would join San Francisco and Seattle where these programs have successfully been in place for years. Furthermore, from what I have read about the economics, in a few years the compost program will become a money maker for the city.

I spearheaded the effort to have my building join the effort. At first our superintendent was wary about the logistics and the possibility of brown cans attracting rats. Now he enthusiastically supports the program and has said, "What is there not to like about composting? It does not attract rodents and the halls are much cleaner." Within months our building moved from having three cans to six. Our block association is actively pursuing a rat infestation problem and is promoting participation in curbside composting to buildings who are not yet signed on. A mandatory law would help to make owners of small buildings take responsibility for their sometimes careless garbage maintenance and help to remedy the rat problem on our block.

I encourage the city council to move forward on Intro0244-2022 because it will decrease CO2 emissions, have an impact on the exploding rat problem and affect the health of all New Yorkers. Everyone in the city deserves the opportunity to participate in a program that is a win-win for the planet, and for their communities. Thank you for this opportunity to testify today.

Stefani Mar, volunteer at Down to Earth Garden, a community compost drop-off location in Manhattan's Lower East Side. I speak in favor of the 5 bills introduced to improve our city's environment, decreasing rat populations and improving the ability to reach zero waste, a commitment we've already made, but made few steps to reach.

Down to Earth Garden is one of Sanitation Dept's community partners, receiving the compost of our neighbors. Prior to pandemic lockdown, we processed over 10 tons of waste in 2019. 43% of that was received by Sanitation through the brown bin program. Yet, once brown bin pick-ups were re-instated in a poorly conceived re-boot, we were not included in that program.

Our neighbors have shown that they are interested in composting. We need the assistance of Sanitation's brown bin program in order to help make this happen. Our small band of volunteers cannot do this all by themselves.

Yes to mandatory curbside organics pick-ups

Yes to re-committing to Zero Waste to Landfills by 2030

Yes to mandatory annual reporting on Zero Waste goals

Yes to community recycling centers in all community boards

Yes to community based food scrap drop-off locations, but expanded to beyond 3 in each community board

Thank you

1. **Re-instating the goal of zero waste to landfill by 2030** - Sponsored by Sandy Nurse
2. **Require reporting** on NYC's progress towards zero waste to landfill by 2030 - Sponsored by Sandy Nurse
3. **Mandate community recycling centers** - Sponsored by Keith Powers
4. **Requiring three food scrap drop-offs in each Community Board** - Sponsored by Keith Powers

From: Virginia Levie <virginia.levie@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 16, 2022 3:39 PM
To: Testimony
Cc: Henderson-Charnow, Hannah
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter in support of Zero Waste Package

Letter in SUPPORT OF THE ZERO WASTE PACKAGE June 16,2022

My name is Virginia Levie and I am testifying from Brooklyn, on behalf of the South Midwood Pollinators. Our more than 80 members strongly support universal residential compost pick up. I am here testifying in support of the five pieces of legislation being heard at the 6/15/22 committee hearing. The Zero Waste package, led by Council Members Hanif, Powers, and Nurse are essential to our City meeting our goal of Zero Waste by 2030.

The Pollinators and our neighbors view universal composting as long overdue. Personally, I am astounded that the great city of New York has allowed itself to be outdone by the likes of San Francisco and Portland.

As the largest generator of trash in the US, it is IMPERATIVE that NYC also take the lead on zero waste.

As gardeners we know that compost is “black gold” and that the City can more than do its part to restore soil health. But even more urgent than combating the degradation of soil is the disastrous amount of methane produced by organic waste in landfills. Municipal landfills are the third largest human related source of methane gas and methane gas is potent contributor to global warming. This “invisible” damage is in addition to the immediate health problems inflicted on the populations where our landfills are located, all too often afflicting communities of color.

By passing the Zero Waste package in front of the committee today, our City can take real and meaningful steps to reduce our carbon footprint and get our City on track to send zero waste to landfills by 2030.

Additionally, the Zero Waste mandating and reporting legislation will provide concrete goals and benchmarks for our City to meet in our journey to Zero Waste. With just eight years until 2030, we need strong Council oversight to ensure our City is taking action to reduce our waste footprint.

Thank you for allowing me testify before this committee. Climate change is a very real threat that demands immediate action from every level of government in every place across the globe. I urge this committee to pass this Zero Waste package.

Sincerely,

Virginia Levie

For the South Midwood Pollinators

Virginia.levie@gmail.com

Southmidwoodpollinators@gmail.com

I have lived in New York City for over a decade, and was raised here as a child. When you decide to raise a family here, you make many sacrifices (space, cost, privacy) in exchange for the cultural and career benefits your choice affords your children. My partner and I bought a home in Bushwick(11222) in 2019 to raise our young family. At the time Bushwick was not the most immaculate of neighborhoods, but waste was under control and most important, not a physical interruption at every block. Since the pandemic, waste in the streets and sidewalk have made our neighborhood revolting at best and inaccessible at worst. I have had to cross the street at least once a day to navigate my double stroller around trash. There is dog feces everywhere. Rarely a trash can in sight. Playgrounds littered with needles. It truly feels like an alternate universe. I have to explain to my children that these are not typical living conditions in a functioning city. It breaks my heart for our community, environment and city. Please prioritize the communities that need help most.

From: Zoe Timms <ztimms@womenseducationproject.org>
Sent: Monday, June 20, 2022 1:58 PM
To: Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter in Support of Zero Waste Package

My name is Zoë Timms and I am testifying from south Brooklyn. I'm writing today to testify in support of the five pieces of legislation heard at the June 15th committee hearing. The Zero Waste package, led by Council Members Hanif, Powers, and Nurse are essential to our City meeting our goal of Zero Waste by 2030.

Every year, our City generates 3.2 million tons of trash, the most of any City in the United States. The vast majority of this waste is sent to landfills up and down the East Coast where it sits and rots. Many of these landfills are located near communities of color and have for decades caused chronic health problems in those communities. Furthermore, a third of that waste is organic material that when it decomposes releases methane, a greenhouse gas that is more than 25 times more destructive than Carbon Dioxide. By passing the Zero Waste package in front of the committee today, our City can take real and meaningful steps to reduce our carbon footprint and get our City on track to send zero waste to landfills by 2030.

With mandatory residential composting and the CORE act, we can ensure that New Yorkers have every opportunity to effectively dispose of their organic waste. Composting will not just reduce greenhouse gases, it creates an amazing byproduct that strengthens our soil and helps farmers across our state. An expanded composting program will also create thousands of good paying green union jobs for our City!

Additionally, the Zero Waste mandating and reporting legislation will provide concrete goals and benchmarks for our City to meet in our journey to Zero Waste. With just eight years until 2030, we need strong Council oversight to ensure our City is taking action to reduce our waste footprint.

Thank you for letting me testify before this committee. Climate change is a very real threat that demands immediate action from every level of government in every place across the globe. I urge this committee to pass this Zero Waste package.

Zoë Timms
Founder, Executive Director
- Tel: 212-726-2582
www.WomensEducationProject.org

**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: Jessica Tisch

Address: _____

I represent: DSNY Commissioner

Address: 125 Worth St

**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: 2/15/22

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: _____

Address: _____

I represent: New York High School

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 0244-2022 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Mary Kringer

Address: 789 West End Ave - Apt 12B

I represent: It's Easy Being Green

Address: itseasybeinggreen.org

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. 208 Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 6/15/2022

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: DEMI A MOORE

Address: /

I represent: NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL

Address: /

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 244 Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ERIC GOLDSTEIN

Address: _____

I represent: Natural Resources Defense Council

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: _____

Address: _____

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. 215 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: JUNE 15, 2022

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ariana Thomas

Address: 2350 36th St.

I represent: TREEdge

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: Gregory Anderson

Address: _____

I represent: DSNY - Deputy Commissioner

Address: 125 Worth St.

**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: Bridget Anderson

Address: _____

I represent: DSNY - Deputy Commissioner

Address: 125 Worth St

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

Harbor
School

THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 244,274 Res. No. 280

in favor in opposition

Date: 6-15-22

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Liana Martina Petersen

Address: 529 E 10th Street 11226

I represent: New York Harbor School

Address: 10 South Street NY 10004

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: Jacqueline Schoenhaus-Barnett

Address: 250 West 27th St

I represent: Myself

Address: _____

Harbor
School

THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 244,274 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 6/15/2022

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Lina Lalji

Address: 19 Grace Court Brooklyn, NY 11201

I represent: New York Harbor School

Address: 10 South Street NY 10004

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

Harbor School

THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 244,275,277 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 6-15-22

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Katharine Murphy

Address: 375 11th St 11215

I represent: New York Harbor School

Address: 10 South St NY 10004

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Harbor School

THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 244,275 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 6-15-2022

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Robert Mackinke

Address: 615 Van Buren St.

I represent: NY Harbor School

Address: ~~615 Van Buren St~~ 10 South St NY

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