

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

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April 27, 2023
Start: 10:12 a.m.
Recess: 10:18 a.m.

HELD AT: COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL

B E F O R E: Kamillah Hanks, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Joann Ariola
Erik D. Bottcher
Justin L. Brannan
Carmen De La Rosa
Robert F. Holden
Rita C. Joseph
Darlene Mealy
Althea V. Stevens

OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS ATTENDING:

Mercedes Narcisse
Diana Ayala

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2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Check one, two. This is
3 a prerecorded sound test for the Committee on Public
4 Safety. Today's date is April 27, 2023. It's being
5 recorded by Michael Leonardo in the Council Chambers.

6 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning, everyone,
7 and welcome to today's New York City Council vote on
8 the Committee on Public Safety.

9 At this time, please silence all
10 electronic devices.

11 Chair, we are ready to begin.

12 CHAIRPERSON HANKS: [GAVEL] Good morning.
13 My name is Kamillah Hanks, and I am the Chair on the
14 Committee of Public Safety.

15 I would like to welcome you to our vote
16 today on Proposed Introduction 273B sponsored by
17 Council Member Mercedes Narcisse, myself, and Council
18 Member Mealy.

19 I would also like to recognize my fellow
20 Council Members that are here today, Council Members
21 Brannan, Holden who's joining us virtually, Bottcher,
22 De La Rosa, Stevens, Ariola, Mealy, and Narcisse.

23 This legislation will make our city safer
24 for everyone by requiring NYPD to receive regular
25 training on recognizing and understanding autism

2 spectrum disorder. Specifically, this bill mandates
3 that autism awareness training be conducted for NYPD
4 recruits at the academy and every two years for
5 uniformed service members. We know encountering an
6 individual with autism spectrum disorder can present
7 unique challenges for law enforcement. Behaviors
8 associated with the disorder can often be
9 misinterpreted as an individual acting noncompliant,
10 threatening, or disorderly. Regular training can
11 provide officers with the tools to recognize the
12 manifestations of autism spectrum disorder and
13 strategies to respond safely and effectively. Sadly,
14 across the country, we've seen tragic examples of
15 police interactions becoming dangerous and even
16 deadly for autistic individuals. Ensuring that all
17 police officers receive this critical training will
18 prevent misunderstandings which can have devastating
19 consequences.

20 With that, I would like to turn it over
21 to Council Member Narcisse to deliver a statement
22 about her bill. Council Member.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Good morning and
24 thank you, Chair.

2 We are better when we make the effort to
3 protect the more vulnerable citizens among us. When
4 we lead with kindness and compassion, our City moves
5 in the right direction.

6 Today, with the passage of Intro. 273, we
7 are doing that just that. Unfortunately, the rates of
8 New Yorkers diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder
9 are on the rise. The increase inevitably will lead to
10 more interactions with police. This training
11 supported by the NYPD and developed with the
12 assistance from the amazing autism advocates will
13 help NYPD officers increase their recognition of
14 autistic behaviors and help avoid misinterpretation
15 and escalation. Intro. 273 would potentially save
16 lives. The bill states that training would include
17 enhancing their awareness and building a practical
18 understanding of autism spectrum disorder and how to
19 safely respond to calls involving these potentially
20 vulnerable New Yorkers. The bill also would require
21 development of interpersonal skills to safely respond
22 to emergencies involving someone with autism spectrum
23 disorders and instruction on interviewing and
24 investigative techniques to utilize in cases
25 involving individuals with autism spectrum disorder.

2 I thank you and I hope my Colleagues, and
3 I pray and I believe, my Colleagues will vote with me
4 to protect the most vulnerable New Yorkers. Thank
5 you.

6 CHAIRPERSON HANKS: Thank you, Council
7 Member Narcisse.

8 Next, we will hear remarks from Council
9 Member De La Rosa.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER DE LA ROSA: I'm just going
11 to explain my vote.

12 CHAIRPERSON HANKS: Okay, so are we ready
13 to call the roll?

14 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Good
15 morning. William Martin, Committee Clerk. Roll call
16 vote Committee on Public Safety, Proposed
17 Introduction 273B. Chair Hanks.

18 CHAIRPERSON HANKS: I vote aye.

19 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Brannan.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BRANNAN: Aye.

21 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Holden.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER HOLDEN: I vote aye.

23 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Bottcher.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BOTTCHEER: Aye.

2 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: De La
3 Rosa.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER DE LA ROSA: Permission to
5 explain my vote?

6 I'm voting in favor of this legislation
7 today because I believe there is good intention
8 behind this bill. I want to highlight the reality of
9 what we have seen. We cannot train patterns of
10 excessive and often deadly force that our police
11 departments have shown in their interactions with
12 those often in crisis. New Yorkers who are living
13 with developmental disabilities are especially
14 vulnerable. When a family calls for help, they should
15 not see their children hospitalized or, even worse,
16 on the other side of that interaction. Our investment
17 should be in services, social work, mental health
18 specialized teams that are equipped to navigate these
19 interactions, and I look forward to continuing to
20 work with my Colleagues to ensure that these
21 vulnerable New Yorkers are treated with
22 professionalism, dignity, and compassion in these
23 interactions. I vote aye.

24 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Council
25 Member Joseph.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER JOSEPH: I vote aye.

3 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Mealy.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: I vote aye on this
5 great legislation. Thank you.

6 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Stevens.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: Aye.

8 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Ariola.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ARIOLA: I vote aye.

10 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: By a vote
11 of nine in the affirmative, zero in the negative, and
12 no abstentions, item has been adopted by the
13 Committee.

14 CHAIRPERSON HANKS: Congratulations. Thank
15 you so much. This meeting is adjourned. [GAVEL]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date May 3, 2023