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COMMITTEE ON WOMEN & GENDER EQUITY

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON WOMEN & GENDER EQUITY

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Tuesday June 14, 2022
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HELD AT: HYBRID HEARING - Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E: Hon. Tiffany L. Cabán, Chair

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

James F. Gennaro
Jennifer Gutiérrez
Kristin Richardson Jordan
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Althea V. Stevens

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COMMITTEE ON WOMEN & GENDER EQUITY

A P P E A R A N C E S

Cecile Noel
Commissioner at Mayor's Office To End Domestic And
Gender-Based Violence

Hannah Pennington,
Deputy Commissioner at Mayor's Office To End
Domestic And Gender-Based Violence

Nicole Teyuca,
Community Engagement Senior Coordinator at
Translatinx Network

Eileen Maher,
Civil Rights Union Leader at VOCAL-NY

Catherine Shugrue dos Santos,
Deputy Executive Director at New York City Anti-
Violence Project (AVP)

Michael Polenberg
Vice President of Government Affairs at Safe
Horizon

Emily Miles,
Executive Director at NYCAASA - The New York City
Alliance Against Sexual Assault

Gabriela Sandoval Requena,
Senior Policy Analyst, New Destiny Housing

Tatiana Hill,
Director of Organizing and Advocacy Women's
Community Justice Association

Rachel Braunstein,
Director of Policy, Her Justice

Aaron Stern,
Manager of Grants and Foundation Relations with Joe
Torre Safe at Home Foundation

Shaina Weisbrot,
Equal Justice Works, Legal Fellow at Day One

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COMMITTEE ON WOMEN & GENDER EQUITY
A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

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COMMITTEE ON WOMEN & GENDER EQUITY

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to the New York City Council's Committee on Women and Gender Equity. Please silence all electronic devices at this time. Anybody that would like to send in testimony, you can email it to us at testimony@council.nyc.gov. Again that is testimony@council.nyc.gov.

Chair Cabán, we are ready to begin.

CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Thank you. [GAVELING IN] [GAVEL SOUND]. Thank you for joining us today. My name is Tiffany Cabán, uh, my pronouns are she/her, and I am the chair of the Committee on Women and Gender Equity. It's time that we did right by survivors. This session, The Committee on Women and Gender Equity has been uncovering the barriers to the accessing services that survivors face. We have heard from courageous survivors who testified before us telling us their personal stories and identifying the institutional and policy based factors that contributed to their lack of access to the services we owe them. I am committed to removing these barriers and proactively establishing the programs that survivors say that they need. That is why it is

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so important that we pass this Support Survivor's legislative package. It consists of three items:

Intro 0153-2022, a program that addresses the economic precarity that again and again, we have heard from survivors is a central barrier to their leaving dangerous situations, accessing the services they need, and beginning to heal. It does this by providing low-barrier, urgently accessible grants to survivors for housing, medical, counseling, legal, and other immediate expenses and services, which could range from moving costs to mobile phone costs, to costs associated with developing a safety plan and more.

Intro Number 154 is an online portal and a written resource guide where all of the services offered by every agency and CBO are clearly laid out, uh, community based organization, clearly laid out in all of the major languages, including Braille, all in one place. And this addresses the problem of access that often arises even when the City already offers the service a survivor needs; since different programs are housed in different departments and organizations, it is often hard to find out about,

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locate, and access the service a given survivor needs.

Resolution, a resolution in support of a state bill to provide paid leave to survivors. Like the vast majority of my fellow New Yorkers, I support universal paid leave; however, even if that takes a while to win that, there are certain sets of people we all should be able to agree require immediate attention, including survivors of domestic, intimate partner, sexual, and gender-based violence. For the sake of survivors, as well as their loved ones and coworkers, we should not be forcing them to work amid the trauma of violence.

For too long the City has cynically used violence... Has used violence survivor's trauma and pain merely as a pretext to ramp up policing, prosecution, and incarceration, leaving the actual survivors without access to the services and the protections that they need no longer.

I would also like to thank my Chief of Staff, Stephanie Silkowski; my Legislative Director, Madhuri Shukla; my Communications Director, Jesse Myerson; as well as the committee staff for their work in preparing this hearing , uh, and I would also like to

2 recognize the members of the committee who are
3 present: Council Members Stevens, and Richardson
4 Jordon, and with... Oh, I also want to acknowledge
5 and thank Brenda McKinney, Counsel, and Anastasia
6 Zimina, Legislative Policy Analyst.

7 And, I am going to turn it to the Committee
8 Counsel to administer the oath.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Chair.

10 Uh, Commissioner, members of the administration,
11 if you can please raise your right hands?

12 Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth,
13 and nothing but the truth, before this committee, and
14 to respond honestly to council member questions
15 today?

16 COMMISSIONER NOEL: Yes.

17 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER PENNINGTON: Yes

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, and with that we
19 can turn to the administration's testimony,
20 Commissioner?

21 COMMISSIONER NOEL: Good morning, Chair Cabán and
22 Members of the Committee on Women and Gender Equity.
23 I am Cecile Noel, Commissioner of the Mayor's Office
24 to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence or ENDGBV.
25 I am joined by Deputy Commissioner Hannah Pennington.

1
2 Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you about
3 access to services for survivors of domestic and
4 gender-based violence (DV/GBV) in New York City.

5 ENDGBV partners with numerous City agencies and
6 over 100 non-profit providers and community
7 stakeholders to implement innovative initiatives -
8 like the New York City Family Justice Centers.

9 Our agency directly manages a contract portfolio
10 of prevention and intervention programming, builds
11 capacity for agency staff and community members to
12 identify and respond to domestic and gender-based
13 violence through outreach and training, and develops
14 policies and best practices to strengthen the City's
15 approaches to these issues.

16 We collaborate with City agencies and community
17 stakeholders to reduce barriers and ensure access to
18 inclusive services for survivors of domestic and
19 gender-based violence, including intimate partner and
20 family violence, sexual violence, stalking, human
21 trafficking, and other forms of GBV.

22 ENDGBV is committed to ensuring survivors have
23 knowledge and access to the many city and community-
24 based services New York City has to offer.

1
2 In 2018, ENDGBV launched NYCHope - a web-based
3 portal that provides educational materials and
4 comprehensive information on services available to
5 survivors. In developing NYCHope, ENDGBV partnered
6 with Cornell Tech to ensure the development of an
7 accessible platform that also protects survivor
8 privacy and security. During development, ENDGBV
9 consulted with domestic and gender-based violence
10 services providers, New York City agencies, and
11 survivors of domestic and gender-based violence.
12 Survivors also participated in user testing to
13 evaluate the platforms' accessibility and utility.

14 NYCHope includes a resource directory that allows
15 users to search for community-based service providers
16 in all five boroughs. The site currently lists 121
17 programs that serve survivors of domestic and gender-
18 based violence. Users can filter providers by
19 borough, service type, population served, language -
20 including American Sign Language, wheelchair
21 accessibility, or remote or in-person services to
22 find a program that best meets their needs.
23 Currently, the site uses Google Translate to convert
24 text to languages other than English. We are in the
25

1 process of humanely translating NYCHope into
2 designated citywide languages.

3
4 ENDGBV partners with New York City Department of
5 Information Technology & Telecommunications (DoITT)
6 to maintain and update NYCHope, including quarterly
7 communication with service providers to review and
8 update organizational information on NYCHope. In
9 2020, as a component of the City's COVID-19 Response
10 Work Group on Domestic and Gender-Based Violence,
11 ENDGBV worked with community based organizations to
12 update the resource directory. Updates included
13 increasing the number of services listed, creating a
14 remote service directory, and providing direct links
15 to hotlines and text and chat services maintained by
16 providers. During the development and implementation
17 of these changes, survivors participated in user
18 testing to ensure NYCHope continued to meet their
19 needs.

20 Currently, providers can notify ENDGBV of any
21 service or information changes, or request to be
22 added to the site.

23 In the coming months, we plan to incorporate a
24 link on NYCHope that will allow providers to easily
25 notify ENDGBV of new or expanded services.

1
2 ENDGBV's Outreach Team, Family Justice Center
3 staff, and partners work to spread public awareness
4 about NYCHope.

5 In 2020, during the height of the pandemic,
6 ENDGBV coordinated a widespread publicity campaign to
7 elevate NYCHope. This campaign included NotifyNYC
8 text messages through the Office of Emergency
9 Management, a public service announcement, paid
10 online advertising, and a social media toolkit.

11 ENDGBV continues to partner with agencies and
12 community-based organizations to publicize NYCHope.
13 For example, ENDGBV is ensuring NYCHope is
14 incorporated into new office initiatives such as our
15 recently launched HUD grant in which ENDGBV and HRA
16 are integrating the unique needs of domestic and
17 gender-based violence survivors into the City's
18 coordinated entry system. In the City, coordinated
19 entry uses the Coordinated Assessment and Placement
20 System (CAPS) to streamline the way people move from
21 homelessness into housing. Later this month, anyone
22 seeking housing through CAPS who identifies as a
23 survivor of domestic or gender-based violence, will
24 be referred to NYCHope for domestic and gender-based
25 violence-related support and services.

1 Regarding Intro 154, we believe that NYCHope
2
3 meets the criteria for an online portal as described
4 in the legislation, and we look forward to discussing
5 this legislation with Council to ensure our goals are
6 aligned with the needs of survivors.

7 ENDGBV is committed to identifying strategies and
8 implementing programming that financially supports
9 survivors and recognizes the great value in low-
10 barrier and flexible funding initiatives for
11 survivors and their families. In June 2020, to
12 address the increase in emergency needs for survivors
13 during COVID, ENDGBV launched the City's first
14 financial relief program for survivors. ENDGBV's
15 program incorporated best practices from other
16 successful flexible funding models across the country
17 and built upon existing City investments for domestic
18 and gender-based violence survivors. The program goal
19 was to serve 312 families with an average disbursement
20 of \$1,500.00 per client. However, shortly after
21 launch the program received an overwhelming number of
22 requests --693-- and were able to fund 377 clients
23 with grants that averaged \$1,243.37, exceeding
24 program goals. The program disbursed a total of
25 \$468,750.00.

1 In addition to directly funding emergency relief,
2 the City is playing an active role in connecting
3 survivors to federal funding and vouchers. This year,
4 ENDGBV convened regular calls and collaborated with
5 the 35 community-based service providers who received
6 federal Pandemic Emergency Assistance Funds (PEAF)
7 allocations through the New York State Office to
8 Prevent Domestic Violence (OPDV).

9 This collaboration included raising
10 implementation questions to OPDV and expediting
11 responses to service providers, creating a platform
12 for providers to learn from each other to expedite
13 disbursal of funding, and linking programs to
14 maximize the number of survivors served. Service
15 providers disbursed both small and large amounts of
16 financial assistance to survivors for expenses such
17 as furniture, moving costs, rental arrears, and basic
18 living expenses like clothing and food.

19 ENDGBV is also the designated City agency for
20 Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV) for survivors in
21 community who are fleeing domestic and gender-based
22 violence. ENDGBV was allocated 1,168 of the City's
23 EHV voucher allotment and launched its EHV program in
24 July 2021, creating the first opportunity for
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survivors to access emergency housing vouchers without having to provide criminal justice supporting documentation in more than a decade.

Our agency provides intensive and ongoing support to our large community of service providers to onboard them to the Coordinated Assessment and Placement System (CAPS) and help them navigate the EHV application process.

In partnership with New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), ENDGBV is contracting with New Destiny Housing Corporation to fund housing navigators who can support survivors who have received EHV vouchers in their search for affordable housing and the leasing process.

We support the goals of Intro 153 and look forward to discussing a version of the bill that aligns with our existing work in this area.

As to Resolution 111, we recognize that many survivors and their families require extended periods of time to address and heal from domestic violence. The City recognized this by working with the Council to pass the City's Earned Safe and Sick Time Act in 2017, and we support state action to further support survivors.

2 ENDGBV is committed to continuing to explore ways
3 that we can support survivors, provide low-barrier
4 financial relief, and spread awareness about
5 available services. We welcome the opportunity to
6 discuss this further with Council and identify shared
7 goals.

8 We look forward to continued collaboration with
9 our City agency colleagues, our community partners
10 and other stakeholders to better serve survivors.
11 Thank you for the opportunity to appear here today. I
12 welcome any questions that you may have.

13 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Thank you

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, and we will now move in
15 to council member questions and answers.

16 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Thank you, uh, thank you for
17 your testimony.

18 At this committee's February Oversight Hearing,
19 which was also on domestic and intimate partner
20 violence, ENDGBV testified that the continuity of
21 domestic violence and intimate partner violence
22 services were a priority during the pandemic, and the
23 City is committed to expanding those prevention
24 efforts. You know, this includes the K-5 ABCs of
25 Healthy Relationships implemented last year, data

1 analysis, facilitating working groups and convening
2 with borough stakeholders, the training teams that
3 work with partner organizations, uh, reviewing those
4 policies and protocol, launching a Voice of
5 Survivor's committee, and an advisory council for
6 feedback.
7

8 But, delving in a little bit more, can you
9 describe how the pandemic has impacted the delivery
10 of services for those who are immigrants, for those
11 who are justice involved, and how it continues to
12 inform the future of delivering services.

13 COMMISSIONER NOEL: So, let's start with those who
14 are justice involved. We continue to support
15 criminalized survivors in every way that we can. We
16 believe that we need to offer services for those who
17 want to engage in criminal justice in terms of
18 having, uh, access to those services and those who do
19 not.

20 We have partnered with both the Women Prison
21 Health Association, as well as STEPS to End Family
22 Violence, to actually put case managers in our Family
23 Justice Centers, to better work with survivors who
24 are criminal justice involved, to ensure that they
25 understand the options that are available to them,

1 and can advocate at every level for what they might
2 need in terms of being able to respond.

3
4 Immigrant survivors, uh, are welcome to our
5 Family Justice Center. We serve everyone regardless
6 of their immigration status.

7 We also work within each of our Family Justice
8 Centers to ensure that providers are onsite who
9 represent the communities in that borough, and can
10 provide services in ways that are culturally
11 appropriate for survivors across the spectrum. But,
12 we work with our community providers to ensure that
13 they can do that onsite in our Family Justice
14 Centers.

15 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Thank you. And, does the City
16 anticipate increase demand for certain services. Uh,
17 and, you know, if so, what will it take to meet that
18 anticipated need?

19 COMMISSIONER NOEL: Survivors across the spectrum
20 have a variety of needs, and we hope that the City,
21 as a City, that will be able to meet those needs.

22 We are currently looking... Our EHV program is a
23 wonderful example of meeting a need around housing.
24 It's the first time that the City has actually
25 allocated vouchers to a City agency, to survivors

2 that are one, not in shelter, and two, not criminal
3 justice connected. This is a huge win in terms of
4 being able to connect survivors to permanent housing,
5 which we all know is a very important step in
6 achieving stability and security for survivors and
7 their families. So, we believe this is a huge step,
8 and we would love to see that continue... (CROSS-
9 TALK)

10 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: But... But, specifically, do
11 you anticipate increased demand for certain services?
12 So, for example, during our February hearing, uhm,
13 ENDGBV testified that throughout the pandemic there
14 was an increase in demand, and there also needed to
15 be a pivot in how those demands were met. And, so
16 specifically my question is, we have experienced this
17 increase in demand throughout the pandemic, we're not
18 over that, like, the pandemic is still here, it's
19 still happening now. Uh, there are a ton of
20 different other, you know, difficulties that our
21 community members are facing. Do you ... Could...
22 Do you anticipate a continued increase in demand for
23 certain services?

24 COMMISSIONER NOEL: We continue... We believe
25 that safety planning and, uh, counseling is a very

1 big need for survivors. They have shown that time
2 and time again. We continue to see that most of our
3 request for services will land around safety
4 planning, so we see that as a need. And it continues
5 to... It was a need during COVID, continues to be a
6 need now, and we anticipate that that will continue
7 as well.

9 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Yes. And again, I apologize
10 for asking multiple times, but I just want to make
11 sure I am teasing out the information that what I am
12 hoping to get an answer to is, you know, you're
13 describing what the need is, but do you anticipate
14 increases in demand?

15 COMMISSIONER NOEL: We anticipate that as it is
16 safer, as we move forward out of COVID, we will
17 probably see folks coming to us now that did not feel
18 safe coming to us during COVID to access services.
19 So, the answer is, yes, I think as we go forward...

20 (CROSS-TALK)

21 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Thank you. Yeah, that's
22 great, thank you.

23 And, in anticipating an increase, you know,
24 specifically, what will it take for you all to meet
25 that anticipated increase?

2 COMMISSIONER NOEL: Currently, we are meeting the
3 need. We are meeting the need through our Family
4 Justice Center; we are meeting the need through our
5 partnerships and community. We don't do this alone.
6 We do it very much with the help of our community
7 based programs. And, so, as we go forward and we see
8 those needs, we will work with our partners to make
9 sure that we are moving forward. And we are still
10 committed to doing hybrid models where possible --
11 where not everyone is coming forward, uh, in person,
12 and we have been able to manage that as well. But, we
13 do that alongside our community partners.

14 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: And how has the PEG effected
15 ENDGBV staffing, or does ENDGBV have concerns
16 capacity related to understaffing or certain survivor
17 services over the next year, especially, uhm, ,you
18 know, those that were not discussed at this
19 committee's hearing in February?

20 COMMISSIONER NOEL: The PEG did not effect of our
21 programs.

22 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Did you have any concerns
23 about capacity? I mean, I... So, you know, again,
24 going back to the statement around an increase in
25 demand, uhm, you know, I think we heard testimony at

1 the last hearing about ,you know, population of
2 survivors that were not being met... needs were not
3 being met, and so, it... Do you have any concerns
4 about capacity related to your current staffing, even
5 if you wouldn't describe it as understaffing, uhm,
6 and ,you know, do you have a request or a need to
7 expand your capacity, and what would that look like?

9 COMMISSIONER NOEL: Currently, uh, we are funded
10 and staffed to meet the needs of our programs and our
11 service delivery. At... If that changes at any
12 point and time, we will engage with OMB at that point
13 and time to discuss that. But, currently, we are
14 staffed, and our programs are funded at the levels
15 that we need them funded to be able to meet our needs
16 now and going forward.

17 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Mm-hmm. And, I... I
18 understand that your assessment is that the
19 programming that currently exists under ENDGBV, uhm,
20 that you have the, in your opinion, the resources and
21 staffing to execute that programming, uhm, how would
22 you measure that up against the size and ability of
23 that programming to meet the need in the community?
24 Right? Like, do... Is there a desire, a willingness
25 to be able to expand that capacity to match up to the

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size of the need that we are seeing in our communities?

COMMISSIONER NOEL: We are always examining our programs. We are always looking at the numbers. We are always looking at the needs. And, when we do see that, we will engage in a process that means that we will engage with, uh, our funders, and both private funders and City funding to see how we can explore ways to either meet the program need or expand it as necessary. But, it's an ongoing process. We are always looking at what we are doing. We are always trying to innovate our programs as well and see how we can work with what we have and do better and serve providers and service survivors holistically.

CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Thank you.

So, you know, this... Our committee has repeatedly heard, including through previous testimony and meetings that Latinx and immigrant survivors are especially vulnerable to economic destabilization after violence, uh, particularly due to limited English proficiency or lack of employment authorization, which often means financial dependency on an abusive partner or taking work in degrading conditions or unsafe conditions just to be able to

1 survive. And, so, I... My question to you is, could
2 you please tell describe, uh, you know, which, uh,
3 ENDGBV ,you know, programs and resources, such as the
4 portal plan being discussed today as part of Intro
5 154, uhm, is language accessible? And has the City
6 engaged in a multi-lingual median campaign to
7 reassure vulnerable immigrants survivors that New
8 York City remains a sanctuary city and that they can
9 seek help from the... from law enforcement if they
10 choose to do so? Uh, but that they can, you know,
11 reach help, uh, in other spaces and places and access
12 other systems?
13

14 COMMISSIONER NOEL: We have engaged in both an
15 online media campaign in, uh, in reaching survivors
16 in multiple languages. We have done that
17 periodically over... Prior to COVID, during COVID,
18 post COVID. And it is a periodic campaign that goes
19 up in different languages. We work with our partners
20 in this to make sure that partners on the ground are
21 able to convey both our services, their services, our
22 services, other agencies across the City. It is an
23 ongoing continual process of making sure that we are
24 doing everything we can to outreach to communities.
25 We have an outreach team that also goes out in to

2 communities that also looks to, uh, ensure that some
3 of the communities with the highest DIR, some of our
4 BIPOC communities are aware of the services that are
5 available both through our office, but more
6 importantly available in their community. They may
7 not always feel comfortable coming to us, but we want
8 to ensure that they understand the services there in
9 their community that can help them.

10 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: And, uh, this is not so much a
11 question as a comment, but, uhm, you know, you...
12 You testified at the beginning of this hearing that,
13 uh, that currency ENDGBV is using Google Translate to
14 do some of the translating. And I would just say a
15 anecdotally, as a near-Rican kid, uh, to taking a
16 heritage speaker Spanish class currently ,you know,
17 one of the first things my instructor said -- and
18 that we get told in lots of spaces -- whether in the
19 context of issue based campaigns, other campaigns,
20 uhm, that ,you know, relying on Google Translate...

21 (CROSS-TALK)

22 COMMISSIONER NOEL: Mm-hmm?

23 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: as the tool in which to expand
24 language access is not up to par, and would expect,
25 you know, professional, uhm, language services and

2 translation services. And, so I would implore ENDGBV
3 to change that and do better on that front.

4 Uhm, my other question though... (CROSS-TALK)

5 COMMISSIONER NOEL: If... If I could just respond
6 to that, we are... (CROSS-TALK)

7 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Sure.

8 COMMISSIONER NOEL: Uhm, on July 15th, right? I
9 think July 15th, we have endeavored to have our site
10 humanely translated. And, so the launch of that will
11 be July 15th.

12 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Thank you.

13 Uh, and, I understand you have the portal, uh,
14 but the... Is it... Is it correct or accurate to
15 say that you don't have the printed guides that go
16 beyond the digital divide, uhm, you know, an in to
17 communities in various languages including Braille?

18 COMMISSIONER NOEL: Our site is available to those
19 who are visually impaired so that they can... I...
20 It's actually accessible along the spectrum of
21 disability, so they can... Are you asking do we have
22 printed materials in Braille? (CROSS-TALK)

23 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Yes.

24 COMMISSIONER NOEL: Uh, we have found that the
25 level of ability for us to keep that updated --any

1 printed material -- is really challenging. And we
2 find that this is much better if we do this online.
3 Uh, the material goes out of date very quickly. And,
4 uhm, services are added all of the time. Our
5 providers are changing what they do all of the time.
6 And, so... But, in piloting NYCHope, we made sure
7 that, uh, the site was accessible visually for those
8 who have disabilities.

10 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: So, it expanded access to more
11 resources, uh, and capacity, uh, I mean in theory,
12 do... You would be able to handle, again, bridging
13 over that digital divide and providing regular access
14 to printed materials. I mean, I am assuming, I mean,
15 again, I am just going to point out the fact that,
16 uh, you know, if we are going to meet people where
17 they're at, we cannot rely solely in the digital
18 front. We see that in this space. We've seen that
19 in our school spaces and families that have struggled
20 to be able to access technology. Uhm, and it's just
21 simply true that we are going to be leaving people
22 out unless we are regularly giving an option to be
23 able to have hard copies of... (CROSS-TALK)

24 COMMISSIONER NOEL: And we do provide... (CROSS-
25 TALK)

2 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: of information... (CROSS-
3 TALK)

4 COMMISSIONER NOEL: We do provide palm cards. Uh,
5 when we do community outreach, we do give some
6 limited printed material, but it is not... It's
7 printed material that can get them quickly to the
8 hotline, can get them quickly to our services. And
9 we feel that that is really important.

10 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Oh, and those... Those
11 printed materials, are those ever in Braille?

12 COMMISSIONER NOEL: We... They are not currently
13 in Braille, but we can currently... We can explore
14 that.

15 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: And, at February's Oversight
16 Hearing uh, again, which was related to... It's
17 domestic and intimate partner violence, the committee
18 heard during public testimony that the courts
19 continue to experience issues related to DV cases.
20 Uhm, is, you know, ENDGBV, uh, ENDGBV aware of these
21 issues? What exactly is being done to assist
22 survivors who might be struggling to navigate these
23 issues in the legal system? Is there anything that
24 The Council can do to assist? And, you know, I think

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that crosses over the realm in to, uh, you know, civil and family court, uhm, assistance as well.

COMMISSIONER NOEL: You know, we... We look forward to engaging with The Council and council members around our services to better understand how we... how we do our work in community -- what ways we can improve. We value very much the input of The Council. You represent communities that are so very important to us. And we want to be able to ensure that our work in your community and every community across this... across the City, is truly reflective of the needs of those communities. And we can do that better when we engage in dialogue. You look at the many things that we are doing and have input in some of how that can be done more effectively in your communities.

CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: and... And, I will say, so, I... I have, you know, I have mostly asked my questions, uhm, related to the bill about the portal. So, I did want to create... I have questions on the other two bills, but I did want to create some space for my colleagues to jump in and ask questions as well.

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I think just for the record
3 I'd say [INAUDIBLE 00:33:19]

4 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Okay.

5 Okay, so I am going to move to Council Member
6 Richardson Jordan, and then Council Member Stevens if
7 you have questions.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDSON JORDAN: Okay, yes,
9 thank you. Thank you for the testimony, it was...
10 It was really insightful, and it was great to just
11 learn more about the services and what is already
12 available. And, definitely, I, uhm, I commend Chair
13 Cabán for holding this hearing and for spearheading
14 this package. I am a proud co-sponsor on the
15 support, uh, Survivors legislative package that we
16 are talking about.

17 I had a couple of questions. There were a few
18 references to low-barrier financial relief. And, I
19 was just curious to know more about that. Is that
20 the vouchers that you are speaking about? Or, is
21 there some other things that are also part of that?

22 COMMISSIONER NOEL: During COVID, we received
23 private funding through the fund for the City of New
24 York. That enabled us to launch the first ever micro
25 grant program, which is a low-barrier flexible

1 funding stream, was limited... That was provided to
2 us to distribute to survivors of domestic and gender-
3 based violence. We partnered with a community based
4 provider to really administer those funds on our
5 behalf. But, what we really saw there was one, the,
6 uh, the ability to help survivors really stay in
7 community and stay safe when they have access to
8 dollars that they can really make choices around.
9 And that was so important. So, many of the...
10 Our... I talked about the average grant was around
11 \$1,200.00. We served 377 survivors through that
12 program. We were able to help survivors do
13 everything from ,you know, buy a laptop, because they
14 needed it for their child to be able to do the work
15 at home -- to buying a refrigerator, because they
16 couldn't stay in the apartment without a
17 refrigerator, to, uhm, addressing rent arrears and
18 other things that... And, it was low-threshold. All
19 they had to do was apply. All they had to was ask.
20 And the dollars were available to support them. And
21 what we found so profound, is that the... Everyone
22 who participated in this program and received a
23 grant, talked about how it helped their stability.
24 It talked... how it helped their safety. If they
25

1 needed to buy, you know, something for the apartment
2 that made sense for them and for their family, to
3 remain there and remain safe, they were able to do
4 that with those dollars. And, so it promoted not
5 only their safety, but their well-being. And that
6 was critical. But, it was a one-time funding, and it
7 was through private dollars.
8

9 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDSON JORDAN: Okay, got it.
10 And, thank you for that insight, because it sounded
11 really powerful to me on the... I am a survivor of
12 domestic violence myself, and I feel like that is the
13 number one thing, is you feel financially stuck. So,
14 it just sounds like a great program.

15 I wanted to ask about prevention, because you
16 were saying that some of the services are around
17 that. And, particularly the partners around
18 prevention, and if there are any LGBTQ partners
19 specifically, uh, as that is... It's an epidemic in
20 our community as well.

21 COMMISSIONER NOEL: Okay, so, prevention, uh, I am
22 a firm believer in prevention. And, it's so
23 important, and if we are in fact to really turn the
24 tide and end domestic and gender-based violence, we
25 need to think about our young people. We need to

1 think about our youth. We need to begin to have
2 these conversations earlier and earlier to begin to
3 really address it. We have a program now in high
4 school that is called The Relationship Abuse
5 Prevention Program, and that is run by HRA, it's
6 called RAPP. We have a program in middle school that
7 is called Early RAPP, where we are reaching those
8 critical early, you know, the years that they are
9 all, uh, exploring and developing and really thinking
10 about ways to engage with each other. And what does
11 healthy behavior really like within that? And we
12 recently launched, last year, The ABC's of Healthy
13 Relationships, which is an online portal, and an
14 online curriculum available to teachers, educators,
15 parents, uh, caregivers of any kind, to begin to have
16 the discussion with the K through 5 group. It looks
17 a little different than it does in middle school. In
18 K through 5, we are talking about empathy; we are
19 talking about being a good friend; we are talking
20 about boundaries; we are talking about the building
21 blocks that can help young people begin to develop
22 the skills that they need as they progress to be able
23 to, uh, understand healthy behaviors and understand
24 healthy relationships. We also work with AVP (Anti-

1
2 Violence Project) as one of our providers. Many,
3 many of our GBV providers work with the LGBTQIA+
4 population across the spectrum. But, we do have AVP,
5 who specialize in that particular population. But,
6 believe me, our providers are very knowledgeable,
7 very caring, and they work with that population also.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDSON JORDAN: Alright,
9 alright, thank you. I think I am out of time. But,
10 I did just want to quickly ask, on July 15th, uhm,
11 with the... (CROSS-TALK)

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER PENNINGTON: Council Member,
13 if I could just... (CROSS-TALK)

14 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDSON JORDAN: Oh... (CROSS-
15 TALK)

16 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER PENNINGTON: The Commissioner
17 asked if I could add this, that, I just thought you'd
18 like to know that we have... The City through MOCJ,
19 the APIP Program that runs through the Criminal
20 Justice System, and it's called Dignity and Respect,
21 and it did not previously have a component that was
22 specifically for the LGBTQ community. And, it
23 just... We... It's totally in development, but it
24 is something that we will be working with MOCJ on,
25 because it has been a need that has been identified

1 through that Criminal Justice based program, that we
2 worked closely with them to create the curricula and
3 to create new trauma informed programing for people
4 who are causing harm in their relationships.
5

6 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDSON JORDAN: You know, that
7 sounds... So, that's sound like a good step. Uhm, I
8 wanted to ask, for the translation turning to human
9 translation on July 15th, do you have a list of which
10 languages are going to be available?

11 COMMISSIONER NOEL: Sure, it will be available in
12 the designated City languages, which are Spanish, and
13 it's seven language, correct?

14 UNKNOWN: Yes... (CROSS-TALK)

15 COMMISSIONER NOEL: Seven? The designated seven
16 languages for the City, which include... Give me one
17 second.

18 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER PENNINGTON: I don't think
19 it's in the Q&A. It is [INAUDIBLE 00:40:23]

20 COMMISSIONER NOEL: It is? Uh, okay, it will be
21 available in Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, French,
22 Haitian Creole, Korean, Polish, Russian, Spanish,
23 and Urdu.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDSON JORDAN: Okay, thank
25 you.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Thank you, Council Member
3 Stevens?

4 COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: Hello, good morning.

5 Thank you, Chair Cabán, for having this hearing,
6 especially when, uh, in my district a New York City
7 Transit Officer was killed yesterday by her
8 estranged husband. And, so, just understanding the
9 urgency of why this is needed and that it is
10 something that needs to be talked about and
11 uplifted, because these things are happening -- and
12 especially when you think about an officer, you
13 wouldn't think that they would be subject to
14 domestic violence and killing, but we know that
15 that is not the case. And, so, I know Council
16 Member Richardson Jordan already asked about
17 prevention, and you guys talked about a curriculum
18 that you are offering in high schools and middle
19 schools, but what I am finding more and more,
20 curriculums are nice, but I need... I would love
21 to hear you talk more about what the implementation
22 looks like; how many schools are actually being
23 implemented in, and is there an evaluation process
24 of knowing if it is actually working or things like
25 that. Because, like I said, I hear more and more

1 every time we ask these type of questions, like,
2 "Oh, we have a curriculum," but if it's not being
3 implemented in schools properly, or actually being
4 done, it kind of goes to the wayside. And
5 sometimes those things don't get implemented, it's
6 just a curriculum that's in schools that don't get
7 used.
8

9 So, I would love to hear you talk more about
10 what the implementation looks like and how many
11 schools you're in, thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER NOEL: Okay, so, if we start with
13 the high school program, which is the Relationship
14 Abuse Prevention Program, that's in about 98 high
15 schools. It is administered by a community based
16 organization. There are three community based
17 organizations that put a designated staff person in
18 each of those schools to be able to deliver the
19 curriculum that we're talking about. So, there's a
20 staff person there that is hired by the community
21 based agency who works in that school, who does
22 classes within the schools for the students. They
23 also work with other, uh, parts of the school to
24 promote, uhm, an environment, uh, that is about
25 healthy relationships. In many schools they have a

1 newsletter. They have projects that they do in
2 various months to highlight both the issue of, uhm,
3 healthy relationships and what they do. So, that's
4 the high school program.
5

6 The middle school program, again, three vendors,
7 the same vendors, the same community based
8 organizations are, again, have staff that they hire
9 who are working with a group of middle schools and
10 doing the very same thing... delivering the
11 curriculum in the school. So, it's not left up to
12 the overworked teacher, there is someone who comes
13 in to the classroom who does that, who engages the
14 students in that dialogue in that discussion,
15 talking about what that means. The program has a
16 summer component where we take students from those
17 schools and train them to be peer leaders. So,
18 that it's great to hear it coming from me, but it's
19 so much more powerful when it comes from a student.
20 Right? When a student tells a student, "Hey,
21 that's probably not a good behavior" "Hey, this
22 person might not be treating you appropriately".
23 So, we really build, or the program tries to build
24 peer leaders, so that their voices can be heard
25 throughout the school; can be the voice in the

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lunchroom; can be the eyes and ears to actually talk about what is going on in the school, and that is so important.

In middle school, it is a curriculum, but we are working with the teachers and caregivers, and thinking about how we can make this, uh, curriculum look very much like the middle and high school. We launched it last year, so it is fairly new. But our goal here is to ensure that the programming for the K through 5, looks very similar to the middle and high school that we are doing.

COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: Thank you for that.

Uh, I am sure you don't have the list now, but is it possible to get the committee a list of the high schools that you're in...

COMMISSIONER NOEL: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: the middle schools?

Uh, and then, because I know you said it's 98 schools, what does... What do the plans look like to get to the rest of the high schools? And I know you said it started last year, so is it like in phases? Are you going to scale up? Uh... (CROSS-TALK)

UNKNOWN: [INAUDIBLE 00:44:54]

2 COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: Is there... And, also
3 is there about... An assessment process to see how
4 it's working and checking in and things like that?

5 By the way, I wanted to say, I love the peer
6 mentor piece. I think those are not used enough.

7 COMMISSIONER NOEL: Mm-hmm?

8 COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: Because, young people
9 never want to hear from adults...

10 COMMISSIONER NOEL: Mm-hmm.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: anyway. So, also
12 thinking about, is there a prevention piece for
13 adults as well? I know saying in schools, that's
14 really nice, but sometimes we miss it. Right?
15 Especially not being in 98 schools, we're thinking
16 about how to... you know some peer to peer stuff
17 for adults might be helpful as well.

18 COMMISSIONER NOEL: So, we can certainly follow
19 up with you on the list of schools that we're in
20 for RAPP and for Early RAPP. We can also, I...
21 You asked us several questions. So, I just want to
22 make sure, uh, [INAUDIBLE 00:45:36]

23 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER PENNINGTON: On the, uh, so
24 glad you asked these questions. On the evaluation
25 front for Early RAPP? So, Early RAPP is a program

1 that our office directly oversees. Teen RAPP is
2 actually overseen by HRA, but we work very closely
3 together. And, HRA, through the same three
4 providers, like we do for Early RAPP, we regularly,
5 through our Research and Evaluation Department, do
6 surveys to evaluate the learning of the students
7 both before and after one session, but many of
8 these educators... And, in the middle school
9 program that we directly oversee, their educators
10 are going to multiple middle schools, and they may
11 go six times in a couple of months, but they may go
12 a couple times, they may go the whole semester.
13 And we do surveys and different points, to... And,
14 some of that information is actually on our website
15 that shows a great amount of learning that these
16 young people are showing from before a workshop to
17 after, and then before the beginning of series and
18 the end of a series.

19
20 And, I think the other question... Oh, about
21 adult programming you mentioned? So, our... We
22 launched, this year, uh, an adult abusive partner
23 intervention program. It's called Respect and
24 Responsibility. And that program is actually the
25 first of the kind for the City that is a non-

1 mandated program. So, the people who are eligible
2 for it, are people who are not being mandated by a
3 criminal court, for example to go to the kind of
4 program. And there are components to that program
5 including an introductory session that is meant to
6 be available to folks who are concerned about their
7 behavior as well as folks who may have already
8 caused harm in their relationships. And I would
9 say on the peer to peer front, I would probably
10 talk through the work that we are doing with
11 survivor leaders, to your point, to be able to
12 learn from each other. And, we have a committee of
13 survivors, who have gone through programming in New
14 York City, called Voices. And really making sure
15 that we're empowering survivors at the appropriate
16 time, based on where they are in their journey to
17 be able to give back and to work with others who
18 are going through, uh, similar issues. I don't
19 know if that answered your questions, but that's
20 what came to my mind.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER STEVENS: No, that was very
23 helpful, thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Uh, thank you, and I just
25 want to thank both of my colleagues for your

2 questions and also for your, you know, sharing your
3 personal experiences or connections to the things
4 that your communities are dealing with.

5 Uh, I wanted to... So, I know that when, uh,
6 Council Member Richardson Jordan was asking her
7 question, you had mentioned that the 2020 micro
8 grants helped ,you know, quote, "people stay in the
9 community and stay safe", can you tell me what
10 percentage of those grants that were issued were
11 used for housing?

12 COMMISSIONER NOEL: We can follow up with you
13 with that. That information I don't have now, but
14 we can certainly follow up and tell you.

15 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Great.

16 COMMISSIONER NOEL: Uh, anecdotally, most of the
17 dollars that were spent, uh, and went to survivors,
18 went to support some aspect of housing. And the
19 evaluation of the micro grant is on our website.

20 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: What is some aspect of
21 housing mean [INAUDIBLE 00:48:51]... (CROSS-TALK)

22 COMMISSIONER NOEL: Uhm, it could be rent
23 arrears. It could be, as I mentioned, a
24 refrigerator, because they didn't have the money to
25 buy a new refrigerator, and it would have meant

2 leaving an apartment that they had -- if only for a
3 refrigerator, uh, if only for furniture that was
4 destroyed by an abuser. So, they needed the
5 dollars to replace the furniture. There were
6 things that were housing related including actual
7 rent.

8 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: So, uh, what... I mean, what
9 are the City's biggest challenges to providing
10 housing for survivors? Like, what... What
11 outreach is in place surrounding the importance of
12 transitional housing and supporting families to
13 ensure communities understand what's going, uhm, to
14 be [INAUDIBLE 00:49:33]... (CROSS-TALK)

15 COMMISSIONER NOEL: I'm sorry, uhm, I can't hear
16 everything... (CROSS-TALK)

17 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Sure, I'm sorry. Uhm, so,
18 uh, and my question is, what are the City's biggest
19 challenges to providing housing for survivors? And
20 then just more specifically, like, ,you know, what
21 is some of the outreach that is in place
22 surrounding the importance of transitional housing
23 and supporting families to ensure communities
24 understand what's going to be put in place and why?
25 What are other efforts that ENDGBV has or the

1
2 City's found to be most successful in addressing
3 these challenges, especially in the last, you know,
4 five years or since the pandemic, uh, and during
5 the pandemic?

6 And then just, you know, describing all of the
7 permanent housing options to survivors of domestic
8 and gender based violence.

9 COMMISSIONER NOEL: So, for survivors, I think
10 for everyone in the City, the challenge is the
11 same. It's no different for survivors. It's safe,
12 affordable, housing. Safe, clean, affordable
13 housing. Which I think is a challenge for the City
14 period. And, certainly for survivors of domestic
15 and gender based violence.

16 We work with our city partners around ensuring
17 that survivors know, uhm, the housing... the
18 housing options available to them. Several of
19 those options are run through the Department of
20 Social Services or HRA. So, there is City
21 [INAUDIBLE 00:50:52] CityFHEPS A and B, if you have
22 an open PA case, and you meet the criteria under
23 CityFHEPS, you can apply for that. There is NYCHA.
24 If you meet the criteria for NYCHA, you can apply
25 for NYCHA. There is a current Section 8 that I

1 described, which is first time emergency housing
2 vouchers that we have been issuing and trying to
3 help survivors access safe affordable housing. I
4 mentioned in the testimony that we have a contract
5 with New Destiny so that they can actually help
6 them. Because, once the voucher is issued, that's
7 just half of the battle. The other half of the
8 battle is to find the housing at a cost that this
9 voucher can cover. And, so New Destiny is working
10 with, uh, they have a cadre of landlords who
11 operate in the affordable housing market or low
12 income housing market, that can work with survivors
13 and have them access apartments that are safe and
14 affordable. We are doing that currently with the
15 EHV vouchers, and there is always regular Section
16 8, but that waiting list is very long outside of
17 the EHV process. There is regular Section 8 that
18 folks can apply for. They're housing options that
19 are available not only to domestic violence
20 survivors, but to homeless folks across the City as
21 well.

22
23 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Thank you.

24 COMMISSIONER NOEL: And, we do a lot of training
25 of providers around all of the housing options that

1 are available. Because, each process is a little
2 different. And our partners in this world have to
3 understand that so that they can help the survivors
4 that they are working with determine the best
5 option and apply for that. And a good part... And
6 a good chunk of our work over this last year has
7 been in connecting domestic and gender based
8 violence providers to the coordinated, uhm,
9 application process called CAPS, which I mentioned,
10 which has been used by the homeless side for a very
11 long time, but has not included domestic violence
12 survivors. It does now. And, so, providers of,
13 uhm, domestic violence and gender based violence
14 providers across the City are now being trained on
15 the CAPS process so that they can begin to use that
16 portal, which will help determine which of the
17 housing processes, applications, are best suited
18 for this particular family, this particular
19 circumstance.
20

21 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Thank you, and I... I...
22 You mentioned NYCHA briefly, uhm, you know, for
23 survivors without financial resources, DV shelters
24 or NYCHA safety transfers are their only options.
25 But to access the DV shelters survivors often must

2 repeatedly call the shelter hotline until housing
3 becomes available, you know, this is... We have
4 heard in prior testimony that this is burdensome,
5 and it can discourage survivors from seeking help.
6 What if anything has the City done to address
7 particularly that issue?

8 COMMISSIONER NOEL: We are really looking at the
9 hotline currently. We are evaluating how we can
10 improve the hotline process. The hotline contract
11 is held by MOCJ; it's managed by multiple agencies
12 including HRA. But, we have heard that, and we are
13 in the process of really looking at how we can
14 improve, uh, both the hotline and access to shelter
15 through the hotline.

16 ZOOM ATTENDEE: [UNMUTED DIALOGUE]

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [INAUDIBLE 00:54:48]

18 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Oh, yeah, somebody over
19 there.

20 ZOOM ATTENDEE: [UNMUTED DIALOGUE]

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: If someone on the Zoom, if
22 you can please check that you are muted, or if we
23 can mute everyone on the Zoom, please?

24 ZOOM ATTENDEE: [UNMUTED DIALOGUE]

25 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Okay, thank you.

1 So, in June 2020, the City launched the
2
3 Emergency Financial Relief Micro Grants Program for
4 survivors of domestic violence and gender based
5 violence. And, while Intro, you know, 15... 153
6 was not based on this program, which was the City's
7 first financial relief program for survivors, and
8 provided funding, as you talked about, to 377
9 clients with grants that average around, uh, a
10 little over \$1,200.00. I think there is a lot that
11 I think we can learn from the City's experience
12 from it. And so, you know, I think, my first
13 question is, if you would describe the biggest
14 challenges, the lessons learned and the successes
15 from the micro grant program?

16 COMMISSIONER NOEL: The biggest challenge was
17 demand. You know, clearly, I reported the numbers
18 within, uh, opening the program we had well over
19 600 applications. And, so clearly that speaks to
20 the need. And, uhm, we believe in looking for
21 opportunities where we can, to ensure or replicate
22 programs that look like this that can offer low-
23 barrier, flexible funding to survivors. Our
24 experience has shown that it really can make a
25 difference in the lives of many people if we have

1 that resource... have that kind of resource
2
3 available. So, that's one.

4 As I said before, we learned that, you know, for
5 survivors, this was a huge success. It was... It
6 was empowering to be able to be able to access the
7 dollars quickly that they needed to be able to
8 promote their safety, promote their stability, and
9 address a critical need. That was very important.
10 Again, I would refer you back to our evaluation on
11 our website, because it goes in to much greater
12 detail, one about the launch of the program, what
13 we did, what types of grants were actually issued
14 for what, and really talks about the experience of
15 both the provider as well as the, uh, the survivors
16 who access the program.

17 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: And, I... Has ENDGBV
18 envisioned how the grant program, which would be
19 required by Intro 153 would differ or be similar to
20 the 2020 micro grant program --both in practice and
21 in theory?

22 COMMISSIONER NOEL: We have looked at the
23 legislation, and we really hope that we can talk
24 about how this aligns with our experience in
25 greater detail, and we'd love to sit down with The

2 Council and really look at that. Both based on our
3 experience, based on our evaluations, and looking
4 at the legislation and the intent of that...

5 (CROSS-TALK)

6 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Yes. And, I am looking
7 forward to those conversations and, you know, even
8 naming that that is our commitment.

9 Uh, just to hear today, have you discussed
10 making any improved version of the 2020 micro grant
11 program permanent, uhm, in addition to any
12 consideration of Intro 153 and just even to get the
13 conversation started just a little bit?

14 If so, like, what resources would you all need,
15 and how can The Council support them?

16 COMMISSIONER NOEL: We have certainly, uh, tried
17 to learn from our implementation. We are always
18 looking for dollars to support initiatives that we
19 have on the table and this is one of them.

20 And, uh, we are constantly thinking about the
21 ways in which, based on what we have learned, if
22 there were another iteration, how we could improve
23 the program. But, we haven't... It's just been a
24 learning process for us. But, I think, first and
25

2 foremost, identifying ways that we can fund that
3 would be important.

4 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Right. And, that moves
5 perfectly in to my other questions, just have you
6 at this point considered a proposed funding level
7 for this program?

8 COMMISSIONER NOEL: No we have not. Not
9 [INAUDIBLE 00:59:14]

10 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Uh, have you, uh, considered
11 or thought about where the funding would come from?
12 Uh, would the approach be similar to the way that
13 2020 micro grant program was funded? Or, do you
14 envision that this could ever become a permanent
15 program?

16 COMMISSIONER NOEL: Uh, up until... Uh, we have
17 been looking for private funding to do what we did
18 before. Which is, uh, often a great way to test
19 models and think about, uh, initiatives that we can
20 launch and, uhm, that's what we have been really
21 looking at.

22 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: And, has there been, uh,
23 thoughts regarding what the grant levels would be
24 and whether there would be caps on the... the

1
2 amounts and thoughts on the purpose that grants can
3 be used for?

4 COMMISSIONER NOEL: We haven't gone in to that
5 detail yet. We just haven't. But, [INAUDIBLE
6 01:00:05]... (CROSS-TALK)

7 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Well, we look... We invite
8 being in conversation around... (CROSS-TALK)

9 COMMISSIONER NOEL: Right, and it... And in
10 conversation we can certainly... (CROSS-TALK)

11 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Yeah.

12 COMMISSIONER NOEL: think about that... (CROSS-
13 TALK)

14 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Yeah.

15 And, what do you think might be the role these
16 grants had, the micro grants, uhm, you know, for
17 keeping people housed?

18 COMMISSIONER NOEL: I... As I said before, uhm,
19 a good number of grants were used towards ensuring
20 that survivors could stay stably housed by
21 addressing a critical need. So, we want to do
22 that. Uhm, and it... It's important to ensure
23 that survivors can access the program easily.
24 Right? It's the beauty often of private dollars is
25 that you can do that. You can really set up a

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rubric that allows for that very quickly. And we will ,you know, we'll just continue to access, as we move forward, what pockets, where the funding can be, uhm, accessed, and that will determine what the scope of a program could look like for us.

CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: And... And before I move in to shift my line of questioning, I do, you know, want to sort of like make an acknowledgment that you all have actually done a good job in getting these micro grants in the hands of folks, and that's why, you know, I am, like, very much encouraged, you know, by the possibility of the work that can be done here. I think that I certainly am confident in your ability to distribute the grants, because you did a good job of it during COVID. And, so, there's, like, a good, you know, framework and ground work done there.

COMMISSIONER NOEL: Mm-hmm

CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: And, so, I think that we are in agreement, you know, that people know what they need, and we just need... We just need the resources to be able to give it, uhm, to give it to folks. So, I think there is a lot of alignment

2 there with the administration, uhm, and, you know,
3 I just want to make sure that we continue to focus
4 on its role on keeping people housed. [INAUDIBLE
5 01:02:24] the really, really big thing.

6 But, I do want to ask, uh, a few more questions
7 that are more related to Intro 154. Do you
8 envision that the portal described by the Intro
9 will be integrated with the... the portal in
10 services offered through NYCHope or whether the
11 City would create a new portal? What are... You
12 know, what are the pros and cons of each approach?

13 COMMISSIONER NOEL: I would hope that we can sit
14 down with you and talk about NYCHope. I don't know
15 if, uhm, you or your council members have gone to
16 the site, looked at the site, and actually
17 navigated your way through it. Uhm, we put a lot
18 of time and thought, we engaged survivors in that
19 process, and so for me it would be sitting down
20 with you and hearing from you what you think the
21 site needs. Right? Why reinvent something when we
22 can improve what we have? And, if there is a way
23 to do that, we are willing to sit down and talk
24 with you, walk through the pieces, see where, uhm,
25 you have identified deficits or things that we can

2 improve. And we always want to improve. So, I
3 would hope that through that conversation we will
4 just be elevating a site that we have already put a
5 good number of resources in to but can improve.
6 And, I would love to hear from you about how you
7 think we can do that.

8 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Right.

9 And, with regard to the current online services,
10 uhm, how many unique visits to the ENDGBV portal
11 did you get in FY21?

12 COMMISSIONER NOEL: In FY21 we had 50,000 visits
13 to our site, over 18,000 of those were new folks
14 visiting our site for the first time. Uh...

15 (CROSS-TALK)

16 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: And... Oh, go ahead? Sorry.

17 COMMISSIONER NOEL: (NO RESPONSE)

18 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: And, what are those numbers
19 looking like so far for Fiscal Year 22?

20 COMMISSIONER NOEL: I don't have that number with
21 us, but we can certainly get back to you on that.

22 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Okay. And, how do the
23 numbers from, uh, Fiscal Year 21 compare to the
24 pre-pandemic years?

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COMMISSIONER NOEL: They actually increased substantially during the pandemic. And so when you compare it to our pre-pandemic years, they were certainly lower pre-pandemic. They went up a lot during the pandemic, and I think a great piece of that was our outreach both through OEM and through other sources. Our online presence was greater, driving information and folks to our site who needed information, who wanted resources, who wanted community resources. And so, uhm, we have seen... We have seen both a jump during COVID that has continued to exceed pre-COVID. Even though we are not out of it, it still exceeded pre-COVID.

CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Now, how does ENDGBV currently screen the services listed at NYCHope, and what are the protocols to ensure that the services are up-to-date? I know that you hit, uhm, ,you know, I know you hit what languages it's available in, and, uh, we talked a little bit about the... how the things are translated, and we'd love to hear more about ensuring the translations are accurate. I know mentioned that you're switching over on July 15th...

COMMISSIONER NOEL: Mm-hmm

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CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Uh, if there's more information that you would like to offer on that, that would be helpful.

Uh, I'll start there, and then we'll continue with a few more... (CROSS-TALK)

COMMISSIONER NOEL: As I said before it's being translated in to the major languages that are required by the City. We agree that Google Translation is very challenging. And, so that the new... the new way that the translation will be done will be fully and it's called... Being humanely translated and will be much more accessible to communities and folks who speak that language.

So, we are very excited that we are now taking this additional step that we had identified before. But, again, it... It takes a little bit to have these things be programmed. And we work with DoITT who is the manager of all City websites to be able to move that in their queue as they are able to. So, now we will have that moving as well.

We have identified easier ways for providers to update their information as it changes. We understand that things happen in community based

1 organizations, and we want them to be able to
2 update that quickly. So, we have developed a quick
3 way for them to send us that information that we
4 will be launching then as well. We are constantly
5 looking at ways of improving how folks are really
6 accessing the information, which is why I think
7 engaging with The Council in this way will be
8 really helpful, so that we can hear your thoughts
9 on it. We engage with survivors. We have tested
10 it with survivors and with our providers as well,
11 but I think The Council has other perspectives that
12 may be, you know, can be incorporated into what we
13 are doing to ensure that we are doing it well. So,
14 that's, you know, that's what I have to offer on
15 the translation. Something else? Is there
16 something...

18 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: uh, yeah, and I only have a
19 couple more questions, and then I'll wrap up. Uhm,
20 so MOCJ also has a portal for victim services. Is
21 there information that lives on their portal that
22 should also be on the ENDGBV portal, and vice
23 versa?

24 COMMISSIONER NOEL: We... I... I think if you
25 put them side by side, you will see there are many

2 agencies that share. You know, there are agencies
3 that will be listed on their site that will also be
4 listed on ours, and we think that's wonderful.

5 So, there should be no wrong door. If you go
6 through that door, and you need information that's
7 based in community, you should be getting that
8 information. You should be getting a provider. If
9 you are a survivor of sexual assault and go to MOCJ
10 and you click, you should be getting some of the
11 same providers that are in ours. And we work
12 closely with that office to ensure that we are
13 coordinating, sharing collaborating, listing
14 resources, supporting each other in this work. We
15 are partners in every way with MOCJ and MOCJ's
16 office in ensuring that survivors have the
17 resources, services that they need.

18 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: So, and... And, just to be
19 clear...

20 COMMISSIONER NOEL: Mm-hmm?

21 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: So, you're saying not
22 identical, but significant overlap, uh, would be
23 fair... (CROSS-TALK)

24 COMMISSIONER NOEL: Absolutely.

2 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Would be a fair... (CROSS-
3 TALK)

4 COMMISSIONER NOEL: Absolutely.

5 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: assessment?

6 COMMISSIONER NOEL: Absolutely.

7 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Uhm, and you mentioned that
8 there is close partnership and communication, but
9 more specifically, like what quality control goes
10 in to making sure that the information about a
11 service provider is consistent across platforms?

12 COMMISSIONER NOEL: Uh, service providers give us
13 the information. We work with... We work with
14 them to ensure that the information is accurate.
15 Many of the pro... The providers listed on our
16 site often have contracts with other City agencies
17 across the board -- not necessarily with us -- they
18 just have to have something with other City
19 agencies. There is... There are also trusted
20 community partners who might not, whose... whose
21 services are known and who have a base of serving
22 survivors that we will include in our website as
23 well. So, I think you will find that we have used
24 a number of criteria if you want to call it that,
25 but that's probably a strong word in terms of

1
2 ensuring that we are listing the broadest list of
3 agencies possible. But, remember the agencies come
4 to us and want their information listed there.

5 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Thank you. And, do you see
6 any vulnerability in having systems like the Hope
7 portal and the COVID grants ,you know, but knowing
8 that they are not codified, uh, so they can just
9 end with a change in leadership or funding for
10 example?

11 COMMISSIONER NOEL: I think that we have... We
12 have an administration that's committed to serving
13 survivors. We are committed to serving survivors
14 as an office within this administration... (CROSS-
15 TALK)

16 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: But there are term limits,
17 though... (CROSS-TALK)

18 COMMISSIONER NOEL: We... We... We... But, we
19 were here before. And, we were here before that
20 one, too. Uh, and I think our... I know that our
21 presence our advocacy, uh, has moved this issue in
22 many ways. Our office has grown. The commitment
23 to providers has grown -- and to survivors. So,
24 what I am saying is that I know there is a
25 commitment of the Adams' administration to really

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ensure that survivors are getting access to the services that they need, and, uh, and I believe that our office is here to ensure that that commitment continues for this administration and in to any other administration.

CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Okay, thank you.

I don't have any further questions, uhm, [INAUDIBLE 01:11:18] just...

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: [INAUDIBLE 01:11:27]

CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Oh, I do actually, my apologies. So, uhm, you know, what of the... In terms of undocumented folks who might be in need of housing, uhm... No, I think we hit that, yes. Yeah, we hit it earlier, I'm going to... I'm... I'm going to rescind that. But, the... The last thing I will say is ,you know, in my opinion I think that, uhm, while there is a clear commitment to do the work that you all are doing, ,you know, in my mind, codification could help shore up the programming in the long term. I think that it's worth doing. I think it's worth not leaving anything to chance, or the idea that things will stay stagnant or stay the same. We have seen so much transition and change and uncertainty,

2 especially over the past few years. That I don't
3 think anything is outside of the realm of
4 possibility as much as I would like to think
5 otherwise. But, I will... I will leave with that
6 point. Again, I want to thank you all for
7 coming... (CROSS-TALK)

8 COMMISSIONER NOEL: Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: And testifying here today.

10 COMMISSIONER NOEL: Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Thank you.

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: At this point, we will be
13 moving to public testimony and that portion of the
14 hearing. We will just wait one moment for a
15 transition. And this will be hybrid, so both
16 remote testimony and in person.

17 Okay, I will calling the names of the witnesses
18 in the first public panel. We will start by just
19 calling all of the names of the witnesses and
20 having them prepare.

21 So, panel one will be Nicole Teyuca from
22 Translatinx Network, and apologies in advance for
23 any mispronunciations; Eileen Maher from VOCAL-NY
24 CRU; Catherine Shugrue dos Santos from AVP, and
25 Michael Polenberg from Safe Horizons. We will

2 begin in just one moment. And, again, this will be
3 both a hybrid and an in person panel. We will
4 start with three... Sorry, three remote witnesses,
5 and then move to Mr. Polenberg at the table, thank
6 you. And, please note, we will also be using a
7 three minute clock.

8 Okay, and with that, we will move to the first
9 public witness, uhm, and apologies just for the
10 record, my name is Brenda McKinney. I am the
11 committee counsel for The Committee on Women and
12 Gender Equity at The New York City Council.

13 Our first witness will be Nicole Teyuca, from
14 Translatinx Network. You may begin your testimony
15 when ready.

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Apologies, just one moment,
18 it does not appear that our first witness is
19 present. We are just checking.

20 The next witness is Eileen Maher, uh, you may
21 begin your testimony when the sergeant calls the
22 clock, thank you.

23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

24 EILEEN MAHER: Oh, shoot... Hi, I apologize,
25 my, uhm, I have to stay off the camera, because my

1 reception is a little crazy right now, so I do
2 apologize for that.

3
4 My name is Eileen Maher, I am a Civil Rights
5 Union Leader at VOCAL-NY, and I am a woman who is a
6 survivor of domestic violence, which I was also
7 criminalized for.

8 New York City needs a major infusion of domestic
9 violence services, shelters, and protections.

10 During the times that I was experiencing abuse at
11 the hands of my former partner, I sought out
12 assistance from the City only to be told over and
13 over again, that there were no open availabilities
14 at some, and others simply did not have room for a
15 new client indefinitely. It is not just an order
16 of protection being issued that will quote, unquote
17 "solve everything". Some people may need to leave
18 their home, obtain a new form of childcare; there
19 are needs for financial assistance, personal
20 protections of themselves, their children and other
21 family members, and the maintenance and protection
22 of current employment and assistance to secure new
23 employment. We are requesting that The City
24 Council pass these and others like them sooner than
25 later.

1 During the time that I was being abused, my
2 former partner and I resided together. Yes, police
3 were called several times; however, they were not
4 helpful in the least. I was at a loss, as many are
5 as what to do with my home, lose my apartment that
6 I was paying all of the bills for. I had a
7 business and a companion service dog. There was
8 nowhere for one to go, and my city has basically
9 turned its back on me.
10

11 But, that was then, we have the opportunity to
12 right not all, but many of the wrongs of the past.
13 My comrades and I are urging you to pass the bills
14 that have been put before you in today's meeting,
15 and any and all others that may become before you
16 in the future.

17 Domestic and partner violence does not simply go
18 away, if -- and I say if you get to the point of a
19 judge issuing an order of protection. In fact,
20 without any corresponding and immediate services,
21 it can make matters worse. It is to many just a
22 piece of paper. This is what my abuser told me and
23 many others that have come before and after me.

24 New York must become a leader in the fight
25 against the plaque of gender based violence,

1 partner violence, domestic violence, and it is all
2 one parasite that can be eradicated if we take the
3 right steps -- steps that have been put before you
4 in these bills today and many others that will come
5 before you in the future.

6
7 Again, I thank you for allowing me to testify,
8 and I wish everyone a wonderful day. Thank you.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your testimony.
10 We will take all questions and answers at the end
11 of the panel.

12 So, we will move to the next witness now. The
13 next witness is, uh, Kat (sp?) or Catherine Shugrue
14 dos Santos from AVP. You may begin your testimony
15 when the sergeant calls the clock.

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

17 CATHERINE SHUGRUE DOS SANTOS: Good afternoon,
18 Chair Cabán and esteemed colleagues. My name is
19 Catherine or Kat (sp?) Catherine Shugrue dos
20 Santos, and I am the Deputy Executive Director for
21 Programs at the New York City Anti-Violence Project
22 or AVP.

23 I want to thank Eileen and all of the other
24 survivors who have stepped up to testify in these
25 and other hearings.

1 As both a survivor and myself, and an advocate,
2
3 I stand with you. My pronouns are she/her or
4 anything respectful, and I am grateful to be
5 testifying at this hearing at such a crucial time
6 in our City. And I wish to express AVP's
7 endorsement of the Support Survivors Legislative
8 Package.

9 As the COVID-19 pandemic wears on, and identity
10 based hate violence linked to White Supremacy
11 groups escalates against LGBTQ communities, making
12 survivors of intimate partner and sexual violence
13 even more vulnerable, AVP and our collective
14 movements' work is that much more important.

15 For more than 40 years, AVP has served Lesbian,
16 Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender, Queer, and HIV
17 communities through direct services and advocacy.
18 We are the only organization in New York City that
19 provides free LGBTQ culturally specific counseling,
20 legal services, and advocacy with survivors of
21 intimate partner violence. We are the only LGBTQ
22 specific rape crisis center in the state. We
23 operate a 24/7 English, Spanish, bi-lingual
24 hotline, which recently introduced a texting
25 service to support survivors of all forms of

1 violence, and we oversee the National Coalition of
2 Anti-Violence Programs and the New York State LGBTQ
3 Intimate Partner Violence Network.

4 Resource and AVP's 42 years of experience show
5 that LGBTQ people experience intimate partner and
6 sexual violence at the same or higher rates as our
7 cis/hetero counterparts. At AVP, 65% of the
8 survivors we support are queer and Trans people of
9 color. LGBTQ people experience higher barriers to
10 safety, support, and services, and The Support
11 Survivors Bill Package takes steps to make urgent
12 and long-term support more accessible to survivors.

13 Intro 153 would create a program for low-barrier
14 grants, as has been discussed by ENDGBV, for
15 survivors to meet their economic needs.

16 As the founder for the New York City Task Force
17 on Domestic Violence and Economic Justice or DVEJ,
18 and as someone who built, grew, and oversaw
19 Economic Empowerment programming, both and
20 Sanctuary for Families and at AVP, I cannot stress
21 how important it is to provide direct financial
22 assistance to survivors that is easily accessible
23 and fast tracked to ensure that survivors have what
24 they needs. Direct grants to survivors help them
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2 navigate the economic consequences of intimate
3 partner violence like housing instability, food
4 insecurity, ongoing medical bills, and other
5 expenses for themselves and their children. The
6 impacts of abuse are long lasting, and can harm a
7 survivors finances for years to come -- as for
8 survivors who go in to credit card debt or take out
9 high interest loans to cover an emergency move, or
10 who suffer identify theft and coerced debt from
11 their partners.

12 Because of the economic consequences of IPV go
13 on long after the physical violence has stopped,
14 survivor grants must be accessible not just in the
15 immediate aftermath of an abusive incident but
16 long-term. This grant program would dovetail with
17 the additional housing opens for survivors
18 including the EHP program that ENDGBV spoke about.

19 Intro 154, which creates the online portal that
20 we've discussed, we are committed to continuing our
21 partnership with ENDGBV to ensure that NYCHope is
22 accessible to all as a portal, including LGBTQ
23 people, immigrants, and survivors living with
24 disabilities enhancing and empowering this existing
25

1 resource will strengthen its effectiveness and
2 reach.
3

4 And, lastly, we strongly support Resolution 111,
5 which calls on the state to pass legislation that
6 would provide survivors and their families with job
7 protected paid leave -- similar to what we have in
8 New York City -- so that they can use that for
9 activities relating to their actual or perceived
10 status as a domestic violence survivor or as a
11 family member of the survivor. Ensuring survivors
12 state wide access to what we have in our Safe and
13 Sick Leave, uh, that Commissioner Noel referenced
14 will really make a difference, so I would to see
15 that extended to the state.

16 So, thank you for listening to the experts of
17 AVP through the oversight hearing and bill drafting
18 process. We look forward to continuing to work
19 with you, Chair Cabán, and other members of The
20 Committee on Women and Gender Equity to improve
21 access and increase resources for all survivors of
22 violence across the spectrum of gender identity and
23 sexual orientation. Thank you so much.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your
25 testimony.

1
2 Now we will move to the final person on this
3 panel, Michael Polenberg, who is present in
4 chambers. You may begin when the sergeant calls
5 the clock. Thank you.

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

7 MICHAEL POLENBERG: Thank you so much, uh, Chair
8 Cabán and members of The Committee. I am Michael
9 Polenberg, I am Vice President of Government
10 Affairs at Safe Horizon. We are there nation's
11 largest nonprofit victim services organization, and
12 we offer a client centered trauma informed response
13 to about 250,000 New Yorkers each year who
14 experience violence of abuse.

15 I am going to talk briefly about Intros 153 and
16 154, and then I want to respond to some of the
17 questions that have come up about the hotline.

18 Safe Horizon is a huge proponent of offering
19 low-barrier... Regarding Intro 153, we are a
20 proponent of offering low-barrier grants to
21 survivors to cover expenses that might otherwise
22 create barriers to safety, and in fact we included
23 this in our recommendation that we gave to the
24 mayoral candidates last year. And I am happy to
25 supply the committee with a copy of that.

1 So, while we support the overall goal of Intro
2 153, we just have a few questions about how to
3 manage the endeavor, including what if any impact
4 the grants would have on public benefits that
5 survivors may be receiving; would there be any cap
6 as to how much a person or family could receive or
7 on the number of grants. And, I think Kat Shugrue
8 talked about... dos Santos talked about having the
9 grants accessible over an extended period of time.
10 Will the designated community based organizations
11 worked together to develop the program to ensure of
12 program consistency? And can the grants also be
13 extended to victims of sexual assault?

14 Regarding Intro 154, I think The Commissioner
15 responded to the Chair's question about whether or
16 not we need a new portal, whether it should be
17 incorporated in to existing portals. We have one
18 from MOCJ; we have one from ENDGBV, perhaps there
19 could be some consolidation to make sure that we
20 have one portal that really meets the needs of
21 survivors. And The Committee may also chose to
22 work with the administration to create a far
23 ranging public awareness campaign in multiple
24 languages that can help ensure that survivors
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across the five boroughs know how to access the portal and learn what services and programs can be accessed.

Regarding shelter, because... and hotlines, because this came up in a few different times over the hearing, it is much more difficult for a single adult to get into a domestic violence shelter than it is for a family. The system was configured for families many, many years ago. A survivor applying to shelter with two children has about twice as much likelihood of obtaining a shelter bed as a single adult does. So, while The City under the previous administration added capacity for single adults in the DV system, I think much more is really needed to really make sure that we are meeting the needs of survivors no matter what size of the configuration of the family.

So, thank you, I am happy to answer any questions.

CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Thank you, first I just want to thank the entire panel of folks who testified, you know, Miss Eileen, thank you for your personal testimony and for sharing your story.

2 Kat, I extend the same gratitude to you. And
3 also thank you for the work that you do at AVP,
4 deeply, deeply grateful.

5 And, you know, Michael, I just also want to add,
6 in addition to that gratitude, that I really
7 appreciate raising the important points and
8 questions that you posed. And, so certainly I look
9 forward to being in... in conversation about those
10 things as well.

11 I don't know if my colleagues have any
12 questions... And I also just would like to
13 acknowledge that a committee member and our
14 colleague, Council Member Gutiérrez has joined us.

15 Thank you so much.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: So, this... (CROSS-TALK)

17 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Thank you so much.

18 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: This concludes panel one,
19 thank you so much.

20 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: [BACKGROUND NOISE] [INAUDIBLE
21 01:27:15]

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We will be moving... we
23 will be reading the names of the next panel in just
24 one moment. So, we will move to the next panel,
25 thank you, just one moment.

2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, I will be reading the
3 names of the next panel. First I will read the
4 names of all of the panelists. They are all
5 remote. And, then I will call you one by one for
6 your testimony.

7 Panel two will be Emily... (CROSS-TALK)

8 UNKNOWN: Excuse me, I think the Zoom is muted.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Hi, I'm sorry, I think it's
10 not muted.

11 Panel two will be Emily Miles from The New York
12 City Alliance Against Sexual Assault; Gabriela
13 Sandoval Requena from New Destiny Housing testimony
14 -- and again, apologies in advance for any
15 mispronunciations -- Tatiana Hill from WCJA
16 testifying on Incarcerated Women; and Rachel
17 Braunstein from Her Justice.

18 Uh, so we will begin with the next witness, the
19 first panelist on panel two, Emily Miles.

20 You may begin when the sergeant calls the clock.

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

22 EMILY MILES: Hi, thank you so much for having me
23 here today. I would like to thank Council Member
24 Cabán for her leadership by introducing this

1 package of bills that brings the needs of survivors
2 to the forefront.

3
4 Uh, my name is Emily Miles, and I am the
5 Executive Director of New York City Alliance
6 Against Sexual Assault. The mission of the
7 alliance is to prevent sexual violence and reduce
8 the harm it causes through public education,
9 prevention programming, advocacy for survivors, and
10 the pursuit of legal and policy changes. In doing
11 so, The Alliance works to disrupt systems and
12 institutions that unfortunately can re-traumatize
13 survivors when they need our support the most.

14 I am here to today to advocate for the interests
15 of survivors of sexual violence for whom the
16 services and supports offered through this
17 legislative package could be critically important.
18 Though the intent seems to include all survivors in
19 the legislation, as currently written it is limited
20 in scope to survivors of domestic violence, and
21 this could mean that many survivors of sexual
22 violence are left behind. This is important for
23 two reasons, many instances of sexual violence to
24 do not occur in the context of domestic
25 relationships. Sexual violence is an umbrella term

1 encompassing a broad range of behaviors including
2 sexual assault, rape, sexual exploitation, and
3 stalking.
4

5 While sexual violence is often a weapon of power
6 and control deployed in the context of a domestic
7 relationship, sexual violence advocates regularly
8 supports survivors who have not suffered domestic
9 violence. Most survivors of sexual violence do not
10 know their perpetrators, and that association can
11 be causal not familial and; therefore, not
12 qualifying as an intimate partnership.

13 Sexual violence survivors are also routinely in
14 need of the very same emergency and support
15 services as domestic violence survivors. Survivors
16 have a particular need for emergency housing that
17 could be met with support for these low-barrier
18 grants.

19 Sexual assault advocates support survivors as
20 they move forward from a myriad of scenarios of
21 sexual violence that, while not domestic violence
22 in nature, have made the survivor feel unsafe in
23 their homes. These include people who have been
24 assaulted a neighbor, a building superintendent or
25 staff member, couch surfers who are temporarily

1 staying with a friend and while in that apartment
2 are assaulted by a permanent resident of the home,
3 or victims of stalking, or any other type of sexual
4 violence where the perpetrator knows and could
5 reasonably return to where their survivor lives.
6 We hope that expanded language will allow survivors
7 to also access these much needed supports.
8

9 Because sexual violence is an umbrella term, we
10 understand the difficulty there could be in
11 drafting language that would be inclusive of their
12 needs. But, we know that we can, in partnership,
13 work with this committee to ensure that they are
14 appropriately represented in these pieces of
15 legislation.

16 As a final note, we would not recommend only
17 using the term gender based violence as a catchall
18 term, and ask that sexual violence be explicitly
19 named. Sexual violence is a weapon of oppression
20 wielded by someone against another with relatively
21 less power. This power difference can be based on
22 race, economic class, disability status, immigrant
23 status, and often gender. But, this violence is
24 not always perpetrated based on a gender power
25 dynamic, and naming all sexual violence as gender-

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based violence can erase the experiences of those survivors.

Thank you so much for your time today, and we look forward to working with you and the whole City Council to ensure the inclusion of sexual violence survivors in these important pieces of legislation.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you so much for your testimony. And, just as a reminder, apologies for not stating this earlier, but we will be accepting written testimony for up to 72 hours after the start of the hearing. Written testimony has no limit, so please also feel free to submit written testimony in addition.

The next witness on this panel is Gabriela Sandoval Requena from New Destiny Housing. You may begin your testimony when the sergeant calls the clock.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

GABRIELA SANDOVAL REQUENA: Good morning, Chair Cabán and members of the Committee on Women and Gender Equity. Thank you for your leadership and for the opportunity to testify on behalf New Destiny Housing at today's hearing. I'd also like to thank the domestic survivors of domestic

1 violence for testifying today and for sharing their
2 experience and their valuable perspectives.

3
4 My name is Gabriela Sandoval Requena; my
5 pronouns are she/her/ella, and I am the Senior
6 Policy Analyst at New Destiny Housing.

7 Our mission is to end the double trauma of abuse
8 and homelessness for domestic violence survivors.

9 We do this by developing supportive housing for
10 homeless survivors, assisting those who are fleeing
11 abuse to obtain subsidies and find apartments, and
12 by advocating for more housing resources. New
13 Destiny is a co-convenor of the Family Homelessness
14 Coalition (FHC).

15 For far too long in New York City, domestic
16 violence has been the number one driver of family
17 homelessness. In 2021, more than 10,000 New Yorkers
18 entered the domestic violence shelter system, and
19 more than half of them left for another shelter
20 instead of finding an apartment of their own.

21 Shelter will always be an important resource, but
22 it cannot be the only resource. More must be done
23 to effectively support survivors' housing
24 stability. We commend Chair Cabán and The Council
25 for bringing attention to the plight of survivors

1
2 of domestic violence and the dire need for more
3 resources by holding this hearing.

4 Regarding Intro 154, we are thrilled about The
5 Council's commitment to make information about
6 resources for survivors more accessible. This is a
7 big opportunity to improve NYCHope and the MOCJ
8 portal by creating processes to keep the
9 information up to date while ensuring that the
10 information is available in multiple languages and
11 update it like that.

12 Regarding Intro 153, we applaud the initiative
13 to create a housing stability program for
14 survivors. There is a high demand for low-barrier
15 grants. The programs that are currently in place
16 are scarce and underfunded, and also limit the ways
17 in which the grants can be used. Survivors know
18 what they need. To allow them to utilize the
19 grants as they believe necessary is of utmost
20 importance for them to achieve and maintain housing
21 stability.

22 We would like to respectfully suggest the
23 following to enhance the proposed legislation:
24 Implement the grants as flexible funding; second,
25 build on the lessons learned from the 2020 micro

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grant pilot; and third to ensure the funding is baselined for the program so that it is permanent.

On behalf of New Destiny, I would like to thank, again, the council for the opportunity to testify. We are submitting written testimony, and look forward to continuing to work together. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you so much for your testimony.

So, we'll wait to have questions at the end of the panel.

The next witness will be Tatiana Hill from WCJA.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

TATIANA HILL: Hello, everyone, my name is Tatiana Hill and I am testifying on behalf of the Women's Community Justice Association (WCJA).

We are dedicated to improving the lives of women and gender-expansive New Yorkers affected by mass incarceration. Founded in 2018, WCJA is led by justice-impacted women and focuses on change through policy advocacy, community organizing and service.

WCJA leads the #BEYONDrosies campaign, which advocates on behalf of women and gender-expansive

1
2 people at the Rose M. Singer aka (Rosie's) jail on
3 Rikers Island. The goals are: to decarcerate down
4 to 100; Close Rosie's before the City's planned
5 date of 2027; and transform the Lincoln site in
6 Harlem into a standalone Women's Center for Justice
7 for the few who remain; in contrast to the city's
8 plan to relocate those at Rosie's to Kew Gardens
9 where they would share spaces and staff with men.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We may be having technical
11 difficulties. The volume is skipping. Please hold
12 one moment.

13 I'm sorry, Miss Tatiana, I think you're frozen.
14 We... If everyone could please hold one moment.
15 We're having a technical difficulty and we are
16 addressing it internally.

17 TATIANA HILL: Sorry about that, I think my
18 connection disconnected and came back.

19 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, well, if you want to
20 continue your testimony, please go ahead.

21 TATIANA HILL: Okay, thank you.

22 The measures proposed today would help many
23 people at Rosie's who are domestic violence
24 survivors to avoid being criminalized in the legal
25 system and ending up at Rosie's.

1
2 We also urge the city and state to do more
3 regarding criminalized survivors. WJCA recently
4 wrote a report with the Rikers Commission that
5 found 45 to 97% of people diverted from Rosie's
6 suffered from physical, sexual and/or emotional
7 violence. Nationally, an estimated 77% of women in
8 jail are domestic violence survivors. Studies have
9 found this abuse can play a significant role in the
10 criminal allegations people face and that women's
11 justice involvement is more likely than men's to
12 flow from their relationships with family or
13 intimate partners.

14 The City's current plan to close Rikers would
15 relocate women and gender-expansive people to a new
16 facility in Kew Gardens opening in 2027. They
17 would share spaces and staff with men. And, with
18 such high rates of sexual abuse and domestic
19 violence, any exposure to men or to catcalling
20 inside a jail can be re-traumatizing.

21 Additionally, women and gender-expansive people
22 who live in Queens will be especially vulnerable to
23 exposure to their abusers as most men facing trial
24 in Queens will be housed in the Kew Gardens
25 facility.

1 National and international standards recommend
2 completely separate facilities for men and women in
3 custody.

4 #BEYONDrosies is advocating for those at Rosie's
5 to instead be relocated to their own separate site
6 at the former Lincoln Correctional Facility at West
7 110th Street in Harlem. This should be transformed
8 into a Women's Center for Justice that provides
9 trauma-informed, holistic care to put women and
10 gender-expansive people on a path to successful
11 reentry.

12 #BEYONDroseis is pushing for improved de-
13 carcaration, particularly for domestic violence
14 survivors.

15 I am going to tell you a story about a woman
16 named Stephanie who is one of our members. She was
17 diverted from Rosie's in 2018, and she really shows
18 why gender-responsive is really an alternatives to
19 Rikers and to incarceration and really could save a
20 lot of these women that we are referring to.

21 Stephanie was pregnant when she went to Rikers
22 on charges related to her relationship with an
23 abusive partner. She had recently returned to New
24 York City after serving a prison sentence for
25

1 giving her boyfriend drugs while he was in prison.
2 When she got home, she was raped by that same
3 partner and became pregnant. Stephanie feared for
4 her life, and she went to a domestic violence
5 shelter. Her parole officer at the time claimed
6 that she failed a drug test -- and Stephanie is
7 telling us that this is not true, that she has no
8 report of that -- and she failed to report her new
9 address, which is at a shelter, and they were aware
10 of that. Because of that parole violation, she was
11 then sent to Rosie's. While she was in Rosie's,
12 she was pregnant and she had sleep apnea, so that
13 means that she was snoring very loudly, and the
14 people who she slept next to were disturbed by
15 that, and they were abusive to her. Things were
16 thrown at her, officers were yelling and cursing at
17 her regularly, as well as people who were
18 incarcerated with her. Stephanie was in fear for
19 her life at different moments. And, she also was
20 at risk for dying in her sleep, because she was not
21 allowed to have the machine that normally keeps
22 people with sleep apnea alive while they are
23 sleeping.
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1 So, three months after she arrived at Rosie's',
2
3 the court agreed to place Stephanie in an
4 alternative to incarceration called SHERO. SHERO
5 offers transitional housing and services for women
6 and their children. Therefore, Stephanie had a
7 safe place to stay and raise her daughter. She
8 enrolled in culinary school, and she found
9 permanent, affordable housing.

10 WCJA thanks you for considering these important
11 measures and would like to work with this committee
12 on ways to help domestic violence survivors that
13 have been criminalized to get them help and support
14 rather than punishment. Thank you.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you so much for your
16 testimony.

17 We will now move to the last person on this
18 panel before our final panel.

19 Rachel Braunstein from Her Justice, you may
20 begin your testimony when ready or when the
21 sergeant calls the clock, thank you.

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

23 RACHEL BRAUNSTEIN: Thank you, Chair Cabán and
24 the Committee on Women and Gender Equity, for the
25 opportunity to submit testimony, in particular, on

1
2 the critical matter of paid leave for domestic
3 violence survivors and Resolution Number 111.

4 My name is Rachel Braunstein, I am the Director
5 of Policy at Her Justice, a nonprofit organization
6 that for 29 years has stood with women living in
7 poverty in New York City using a "pro bono first"
8 approach to recruit and mentor volunteer lawyers to
9 provide free legal help to address individual and
10 systematic barriers in the areas of family and
11 matrimonial law.

12 The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted how Her
13 Justice clients and women like them are the
14 backbone of our communities, serving on the
15 frontlines as essential workers and carrying the
16 brunt of the pandemic's economic burden. At the
17 same time, they faced heightened rates of intimate
18 partner violence and unemployment, and increased
19 caregiving responsibilities.

20 We are grateful for City Council and the
21 Committee's long-standing focus on these issues,
22 and for support from the Council that allows Her
23 Justice to provide direct representation to and
24 skilled advocacy on behalf of women living in
25 poverty.

1 Approximately 80% of Her Justice clients are
2 survivors of intimate partner violence or gender
3 based violence. Based on our experience working
4 with these women, we support Resolution 111,
5 because a strong and comprehensive legal framework
6 supporting the rights of survivors is critical to
7 the individual stability and to ameliorating
8 systemic issues related to domestic violence.
9

10 As we did in 2017 when the City was considering
11 enacting paid safe leave, we want to bring
12 attention to the need for a comprehensive State law
13 that would allow survivors to seek a range of
14 needed help, in particular, legal services without
15 detriment to their employment.

16 Civil legal services are critical for survivors
17 of domestic violence. The effects of domestic
18 violence in a survivor's life are pervasive. For
19 many, fleeing domestic violence may lead to their
20 first engagement with the legal system, by
21 participating in the criminal justice system as a
22 witness or seeking a civil court order of
23 protection.

24 It is less well-known that domestic violence
25 survivors need to access civil courts for other

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kinds of relief -- child and spousal support orders, custody, and divorce to secure marital assets.

Legal services are essential, but not sufficient. Our clients cannot maintain safety or meaningfully participate in their cases if they do not have a job or sufficient income.

Consider stories like Maria's who was fired from her job as a secretary after she missed three days of work to attend court hearings in her custody case against her abusive ex-partner, who repeatedly called her workplace during the litigation. Without a job, Maria resorted to government assistance to make ends meet.

With stronger legal protections, New Yorkers like these clients would be able to participate in seeking needed legal relief to help them forward as survivors of domestic violence and maintain employment that is critical to their family's stability.

Thank you to The Council and The Committee for dedicating this hearing, and thank you for your time.

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COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you so much. This concludes this panel. Please hold one moment.

CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Thank you, I mean, I just, again, wanted to take a moment to extend gratitude to all of those who testified.

You know, Emily, I really appreciate the points that you've raised about reaching as many people experiencing violence as possible. So, we will absolutely look, you know, look in to shifting language on that front,

Gabriela, thank you for leaning in to the importance of housing stability, and certainly for the thoughtful suggestions you made on flexible spending and building on the lessons learned from the micro grants.

And, again, gratitude to Tatiana and Rachel as well for your thoughtful testimonies.

And, I will turn it over to my colleagues if they have any questions or comments.

Uh, Council Member Richardson Jordan?

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDSON JORDAN: Yes, I will echo, uh, Chair Cabán in just saying thank you for the testimony particularly getting to hear that story about criminalized survivors, and hearing

1 about, you know, a particular survivor. It just
2 speaks to the need for us to have resources and
3 funding and options outside of the criminal justice
4 system, because we see also that sometimes our
5 survivors are criminalized.
6

7 I did have a question, it could go to a number
8 of folks, but I think the representative from New
9 Destiny might be the best person. I just wanted to
10 ask, because during this hearing, we've heard from
11 administration that the legislative package that
12 we're talking about today isn't particularly
13 necessary, that somehow, you know, they're already
14 working on these things. And there seems to be a
15 little bit of resistance to codifying these
16 services and making it legally required. And so I
17 just wanted to hear from you as an advocate, you
18 know, what do you think about that, and do you
19 think it is necessary to really have it codified?

20 GABRIELA SANDOVAL REQUENA: Thank you for the
21 question, Council Member. I believe... I think
22 that, uh, the answer... The short answer to that
23 is that it is always helpful to have programs that
24 assist survivors to be part of the City Charter
25 just to ensure that the program has sustainability

2 and continues to exist throughout time and the
3 passing of administration. So, would love to sit
4 down perhaps with you, along with The Commissioner,
5 and ENDGBV to see what the opportunities are to
6 perhaps revise or amend the languages so that these
7 could be moved forward. But, the short answer is,
8 yes, it always easier to have and best to have
9 things codified in to the City Charter.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDSON JORDAN: Alright, thank
11 you.

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Were there any other council
13 member questions?

14 Okay, this concludes this panel. Thank you so
15 much to all of the witnesses who testified today.

16 We will now be moving to our final panel. I
17 will call the names of all the panelists, and there
18 are two. And then that will conclude the hearing;
19 however, we will check for anyone we inadvertently
20 missed, uhm, before for concluding.

21 So, the next panel will be Aaron Stern from the
22 Joe Torre Safe At Home Foundation, followed by
23 Shaina Weisbrot, again, please forgive any
24 mispronunciations, but Miss Weisbrot from Day One.

2 So moving to panel three, Aaron Stern, you may
3 begin your testimony when the sergeant calls the
4 clock.

5 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

6 AARON STERN: Hello, everyone, thank you Chair
7 Cabán and members of The Committee on Women and
8 Gender Equity. I am Aaron Stern, Manager of Grants
9 and Foundation Relations with Joe Torre Safe At
10 Home Foundation.

11 When our co-founder, Joe Torre, was a child he
12 witnessed the unrelenting verbal abuse and saw the
13 results of the physical harm inflicted on his
14 mother. The perpetrator was not some stranger, but
15 his own father. The emotional and physical pain his
16 mother suffered scarred her life, and Joe's, too.
17 As Joe grew older and came to terms with his
18 experience, he wanted to ensure that no child grew
19 up as he did - feeling alone and afraid. That's why
20 he started Safe At Home over twenty years ago in
21 New York City.

22 Safe at Home currently operates 17 school-based
23 prevention and intervention programs across the
24 country called Margaret's Place - named after Joe's
25 mother - four of which operate in New York City.

1 Margaret's Place is a youth - friendly space
2 within the school, staffed by a full-time,
3 master's-level counselor who provides counseling to
4 youth, anti-violence workshops, peer leadership
5 engaging youth to break the cycle of violence, and
6 support for school staff and parents.
7

8 Safe At Home believes all survivors should
9 receive access to resources necessary to begin the
10 path towards healing. Ensuring survivors can easily
11 access this resources is crucial to their success.

12 Developing a portal with easy access to resource
13 guides, particularly developing the materials in a
14 number of languages and inclusive of services for
15 teens as well as adults will allow all survivors to
16 access the support they need. Further, survivors
17 often need a myriad of services on their path
18 toward safety; therefore, the resource guide should
19 not only include a list of providers, but a
20 comprehensive list of all of the types of services
21 a survivor could possibly access.

22 In their path to safety, survivors are often
23 faced with immediate financial needs including
24 housing, medical, counseling, legal, and other
25 expenses. It is a high barrier for individuals

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making the decision to leave an abusive relationship and domestic violence is one of the leading causes of homelessness for women and children. Providing access to low-barrier grants is critical to support survivors' path toward safety.

I want to thank The Committee for allowing me to provide testimony today.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, you can finish your sentence.

AARON STERN: That was the end of my sentence...
(CROSS-TALK)

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Apologies, apologies. Thank you so much.

Uh, okay, we will now move to our final witness. Again, we will check for anyone that we inadvertently missed at the end of the hearing.

Our final witness will be Shaina Weisbrot from Day One, thank you.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

SHAINA WEISBROT: Good afternoon, my name is Shaina Weisbrot, and I am an Equal Justice Works Legal Fellow at Day One, which means that I am an attorney on their legal team, and I am testifying on their behalf.

1
2 Day One is the only nonprofit in New York that
3 commits its full resources to addressing intimate
4 partner abuse among youth ages 24 and under.

5 Through a combination of educational, social, and
6 legal services we educate and assist more than
7 25,000 young people annually.

8 We are very grateful for the opportunity to
9 speak to The Committee on Women and Gender Equity
10 today about the about the "Support Survivors"
11 Legislative Package -- including Intro 153, Intro
12 154, and Resolution 111 as we are fully and
13 strongly in support of each of these opportunities
14 for young people who experience violence in the
15 relationships.

16 At Day One, we will always center young people
17 in the development of intimate partner violence
18 legislation and policy making -- particularly when
19 you consider that nationally, women aged 16-24
20 experience the highest per capita rate of intimate
21 partner violence, which is triple the national
22 average. And often legislation is not designed
23 with young people in mind, so we encourage this
24 committee to ensure that this legislation and its
25 implementation is responsive to the needs of young

1
2 people of color, pregnant and parenting teens,
3 undocumented youth, young people in care, students,
4 and young survivors working multiple low wage jobs.

5 And recognizing a young person's needs in this
6 legislation can be done in a myriad of ways. For
7 Intro 154's Housing Stability Program we would like
8 to ensure that young people are considered covered
9 individuals -- they can access the low-barrier
10 grants as proposed. In addition, for this same
11 piece of legislation, we would like to ensure that
12 individuals qualify based on their individual
13 income as opposed to the household income, as many
14 young people still live their families, and that
15 household income would could exceed the eligibility
16 requirements. Yet they are still unsafe in that
17 home, and may not be able to leave for financial
18 reasons.

19 In additional, we want to ensure that youth have
20 the ability to access these funds. So, we hope
21 that youth serving organization will be included as
22 a community based organization designee to
23 distribute this grant, as we know that young people
24 may not be connected to many other community based
25 services or city agencies.

1
2 And, finally, many of your young people might
3 have the support of families and thus have stable
4 housing, but could be in real need of financial
5 support for their safety, for child care,
6 employment, or to foster financial independence
7 from their abuser. So, we would ask that The City
8 Council consider other opportunities for emergency
9 funding for young people that is not necessarily
10 tied to housing.

11 I would ask that this committee continue to
12 consider the ways to center young people in the
13 development of Intro 153 and Resolution Number 111.
14 For example, by considering the ways of the methods
15 for outreach for each piece of this legislation
16 will reach young people, whom often the story told
17 or the picture painted of a survivor of domestic
18 violence centers the story of a cis gender,
19 heterosexual, middleclass, married white woman. We
20 have learned through our nearly 20 years of work
21 with young people that stories, pictures, and
22 experiences of survivors are diverse and dynamic.
23 We want responses that are similarly diverse,
24 dynamic, and for youth, in particular, inclusive.

2 We have submitted written testimony that
3 provides more detailed perspective and insight on
4 each part of this legislative package to provide
5 further information.

6 Again, we thank you, Council Members, for the
7 opportunity to speak about these important issues
8 affecting young people who are victims of domestic
9 violence.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you so much for your
11 testimony. This concludes this panel.

12 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Uh, thank you very much. I
13 want to echo those, uh, sentiments of thanks, you
14 know, especially the highlighting of the effects on
15 young folks in particular. So, thank you, and we
16 will pass over to my colleagues if there are any
17 questions or comments.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDSON JORDAN: I'm good.

19 CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Okay, thank you.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Okay, and at this point, this
21 concludes our public testimony. So, we will just
22 do one check, because this is a hybrid hearing, to
23 ensure that we have not missed anyone
24 inadvertently. Are there any witnesses? You can
25 use the Zoom Raise Hand Function. Is there anyone

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logged in that we have missed for the purposes of public testimony?

We are not seeing anyone new. We are not seeing any hands. Okay, at this point, we have concluded public testimony and that portion of the hearing. So we will move to The Chair for final remarks.

CHAIRPERSON CABÁN: Yes, thank you. Uh, I want to say thank you to my colleagues, uh, here in the committee, the committee staff, but especially want to thank everyone who testified. And, you know, first and foremost, those who testified and shared difficult personal experiences. And I think that, you know, what we have heard and seen is that while there are, uh, you know, some good resources and programs out there, we absolutely need to ensure that they stay available to all New Yorkers, that we're expanding capacity, reaching folks where they're at, and that we are ensuring that this is something that will go on -- that this is the kind of support that will exist in perpetuity.

I also want to reiterate and invite folks to submit written testimony. You can do that for up to 72 hours after the close of today's hearing.

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COMMITTEE ON WOMEN & GENDER EQUITY

And, so thanks to everyone again, and we look forward to moving this legislation forward.

[GAVELING OUT] [GAVEL SOUND]

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 July 22, 2022