

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS

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HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Rm,  
14th Fl.

B E F O R E:  
ERIK MARTIN DILAN  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

- GALE A. BREWER
- LEROY G. COMRIE, JR.
- ELIZABETH S. CROWLEY
- LEWIS A. FIDLER
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- JOEL RIVERA
- ERIC A. ULRICH
- JUMAANE D. WILLIAMS

CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Okay good morning  
and thank you for coming.

[gavel]

CHAIRPERSON DILAN: I'd like to call this  
hearing to order. My name is Erik Martin Dilan and  
I'm the Chairperson of the City Council's Housing and  
Buildings Committee. And today we will be holding a  
first hearing on Intro 475 which is a bill sponsored  
by my colleague Council Member Charles Barron. Intro  
475 is intended to protect elderly tenants and it's a  
bill that will require owners to give notice to HPD  
before evicting elderly tenants. HPD would then be  
required to give those elderly tenants, would be  
required to give those elderly tenants a list of  
entities that will provide legal assistance or help  
in obtaining legal assistance. The bill also requires  
that HPD work with the Commission on Human Rights on  
an annual report analyzing trends in elderly  
evictions. This report, by this proposal, would have  
to be submitted to the mayor of the city of New York  
as well as the speaker of the New York City Council.  
At this time I'd like to acknowledge the bill's  
sponsor Council Member Charles Barron for a brief  
opening statement on his legislative proposal.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Well thank you  
3 very much Chair. Chair Dilan thank you very much for  
4 giving us the opportunity to have a hearing on this  
5 bill. This bill came about because of a 94 year old,  
6 while she was 92 and 93 at the time because it's been  
7 going on for about a year, a Florence Rice who was  
8 being evicted and abused. I mean the landlord  
9 disrespected her. All of the things that HPD has  
10 concerns about that's in place already as you say the  
11 Marshal comes, and then the Marshal will inform the  
12 Department of Aging, HPD, so these things are already  
13 in place. With all of that in place senior citizens  
14 are getting abused by landlords and they need  
15 protection. This bill is not even costing us a whole  
16 lot. It's garnering some of the city agency's  
17 information that already exists, putting a highlight  
18 on it, and saying that if you're going to take one of  
19 our seniors out of their apartment that you have to  
20 contact HPD and the Commission on Human Rights to  
21 protect our seniors. I don't see how that becomes you  
22 know excessive, marshalling resources of city  
23 agencies that already exist. If everything was fine  
24 we wouldn't be here today with this bill. If  
25 everything was working that's in place to protect

1  
2 seniors we wouldn't even be here with this bill. This  
3 bill just simply says that first landlords and you  
4 saying and some of your remarks may not know the age  
5 of their tenants, they know, they know a senior. If  
6 you're a landlord and you don't know a senior from  
7 someone who isn't a senior I doubt seriously if  
8 that's one of their major problems. Matter of fact  
9 they focus sometimes on seniors because they're  
10 vulnerable and they don't have the protections even  
11 through the Department of Aging. If we had all of  
12 that in place we wouldn't even bother with the bill.  
13 So my appeal to you is that and I read your concerns  
14 that this bill it's, it's not costing you anything.  
15 This bill protects seniors. We've had them won, after  
16 I wanted her to come today Ms. Rice is 94 years old.  
17 She has been fighting for this bill over the last  
18 couple years. I'm just hoping the agency could  
19 support us on this one and then we can work on how we  
20 executed things like that. But support us on this. We  
21 don't know how much longer senior citizens have to be  
22 around. And this bill was very very important to Ms.  
23 Rice. We was trying to get her here today but that  
24 was a bit of a challenge. 94 years old she was a  
25 consumer affairs rights advocate for years up in

1  
2 Harlem and it was her case that we were highlighting  
3 throughout the year on how they just did her  
4 terribly. And seniors especially those on fixed  
5 income have real problems with landlords. This bill  
6 doesn't come near, not even saying provide them with  
7 the lawyers and the money you know that's what we  
8 wanted to do as well. And some bills do that and I  
9 think that's a good bill as well. But this one just  
10 says they got to report and going reporting directly  
11 to you, directly to the Human Rights Commission would  
12 really protect our seniors and that's what we wanted  
13 our people to consider this morning. Our seniors has  
14 done a lot for us over the years. This is the very  
15 least we can do to protect them from landlords who  
16 been abusing them. Thank you Mr. Chair.

17 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Thank you Councilman  
18 Barron and I want to thank... I do want to, I do want  
19 to just say thank you for showing up. I know the lack  
20 of notice to the agency is shorter than what it's  
21 traditionally been but hopefully you understand that  
22 we are nearing the end of session and our time frames  
23 are, are getting very tight around here. So thank you  
24 for showing up. With that I know that you are  
25 probably and I want to state for the record because

1  
2 of the lack of notice probably not as prepared for  
3 this hearing as you normally would be under normal  
4 circumstances so I just want to bring that out for  
5 full disclosure and, and so that it's publically  
6 known why you may not be prepared as some might  
7 think. However I do think that we are prepared enough  
8 to, to have a discussion on this and we'll, we'll  
9 hear your, we'll hear your statement in a minute. And  
10 then we can have a discussion and see how we are  
11 perceived on this matter. So with that I'd like to  
12 welcome you and if you can introduce yourself in your  
13 own voice and then begin with your testimony.

14 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: Sure. Good morning  
15 Chairman. Good morning members of the committee. And  
16 I'll state on the record that... Well first of all I'm  
17 Chris Gonzalez from HPD. And I will state on the  
18 record that given that this is your last housing and...

19 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: This is not my last.

20 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: This is not your  
21 last? Okay. So...[crosstalk]

22 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: This is not my last  
23 yeah.

24 [laughter]

25

1  
2 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: Well if this was  
3 your last I wouldn't miss it.

4 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Well thank you.

5 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: Because you've,  
6 you've been a great partner.

7 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: I appreciate that.  
8 Yeah.

9 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: ...been a great,  
10 great partners over the years so I appreciate that. I  
11 will go ahead and read my testimony.

12 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: It is my last with  
13 HPD.

14 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: Your last with H...

15 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Yeah.

16 [laughter]

17 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: Good point. Yes,  
18 well qualified. Good morning Chairman Dilan, members  
19 of the Housing and Buildings Committee. My name is  
20 Chris Gonzalez Associate Commissioner under HPD.  
21 Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on  
22 proposed introduction 475 which focuses on the issue  
23 of evictions of New York City's elderly population.  
24 Introduction 475 would require the owner of a  
25 multiple dwelling notify HPD should they commence or

1  
2 intend to commence eviction proceedings on a tenant  
3 over the age of 62. Although we certainly believe  
4 notice of an impending eviction would help in  
5 preventing unscrupulous landlords from wrongfully  
6 targeting elderly tenants with eviction proceedings  
7 we are concerned that this notice requirement is  
8 duplicative what, of what is already required by the  
9 New York City Marshal before conducting an eviction  
10 or legal possession at a residential premises. The  
11 Marshal must find out whether the premises are  
12 occupied by an individual such as disabled, elderly,  
13 or infirm adults or unattended children who are  
14 unable to fend for themselves. If such a person  
15 occupies the apartment the Marshal must notify the  
16 Department of Investigation who in turn notifies  
17 Adult Protective Services, a division of the New York  
18 City Human Resources Administration. Given the, this  
19 existing requirement, adding an additional notice  
20 requirement seems like a debatable use of city  
21 resources. It is also worth noting that the bill as  
22 written assumes the building owner is aware of the  
23 age of their tenants. Other than a tenant seeking  
24 SCRIE we are currently unaware of any requirement  
25 that a tenant provide their age to a landlord. Absent



1 that information it is questionable whether a  
2 landlord would be able to comply with this  
3 requirement. Upon receipt of an owners notification  
4 of potential eviction the bill also requires HPD  
5 provide the tenant a list of entities funded by the  
6 city to provide legal services. We certainly support  
7 the idea of providing tenants access to resources but  
8 in this instance feel it, it appropriate to defer to  
9 our colleagues at the Department for the Aging. The  
10 legislation also requires HPD in conjunction with the  
11 Commission on Human Rights produce an annual report  
12 based on the collected notifications. This again  
13 raises the issue of appropriate use of city  
14 resources. Since similar information already exists  
15 the resources to collect these notices and produce  
16 the required report might otherwise be allocated  
17 towards other city services that enforce housing  
18 maintenance standards. Finally the bill includes  
19 language classifying violation of the notice  
20 provision as a misdemeanor in subjecting these owners  
21 to a fine of up to 1,000 dollars. We have concerns  
22 about this provision as written since it appears to  
23 be an unclassified misdemeanor without a definite  
24 term. With more time to review the proposed  
25

1  
2 legislation we would suggest consulting the district  
3 attorney for appropriate languish. We thank you for  
4 the opportunity to provide testimony and would be  
5 happy to respond to any questions you have.

6 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: At this time I have no  
7 problem allowing the sponsor's privilege Council  
8 Member Barron if he want to open up the questioning  
9 you free would be free to do so.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: See there's a  
11 contradiction, an inherent contradiction in your  
12 response. The Marshal can identify an elderly person  
13 but the landlord can't. You know you say in your, in  
14 your testimony that the landlord would have to know  
15 that the person's a senior citizen. Well the Marshall  
16 can find out but the landlord can't? Of course the  
17 landlord can. In matter of fact in some housing it's  
18 all senior housing and in some instances a percentage  
19 of the housing is for seniors. Identifying a senior  
20 citizen will not be a problem. If everything that you  
21 said, if this is a duplication we wouldn't have the  
22 problem we're having with seniors. Right now with all  
23 that you just said they're Marshals that don't  
24 notify, they're landlords that don't notify. We're  
25 leaving seniors out there unprotected. So if all that

1  
2 you mentioned in your presentation was working we  
3 wouldn't have a need for this bill. But I want to get  
4 you to see the need for it, and perhaps we need to  
5 get together because I would like to see if we can  
6 get this bill passed if it's possible by the 19<sup>th</sup>  
7 which is our last, our last stated meeting. And maybe  
8 we can come and, and talk and you can talk to my  
9 staff and even some of the people that are really  
10 concerned about this across the city. Because  
11 everything that you mentioned in your bill is what,  
12 in your presentation is what this bill would assure  
13 us of providing for seniors. Because what exists is  
14 not working.

15 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: We'd be certain,  
16 we'd, we'd certainly be happy to have that  
17 conversation. I think you know in terms of you know  
18 we, we certainly agree that you know providing more  
19 notice would definitely lead to a situation where  
20 the, the rights of senior, of senior citizen, elderly  
21 tenants would be protected because at least there  
22 would be notice of an impending eviction. Our concern  
23 with the mechanism is really you know how do we  
24 implement and collect such information. It's,  
25 although you know... [interpose]

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Well you, you said  
3 it's readily available so.

4 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: Well so I think...  
5 [interpose]

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: If it's so readily  
7 available why would you have difficulty collecting  
8 it?

9 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: Well it's not, well  
10 it's not directly given to HPD so... [interpose]

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Right so the...  
12 [interpose]

13 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: ...we could, we, you  
14 know perhaps there's potential to collaborate with,  
15 with the Marshal's office or with DFTA to figure out...  
16 [interpose]

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Right I mean it,  
18 it's not difficult to figure out that part of it. If  
19 these are the problems we don't have a problem  
20 because that would not be difficult. See what we're  
21 trying to do with this bill, the spirit of it, is to  
22 say to the landlord you're going to have more  
23 difficulty preying on our seniors P-R-E-Y not P-R-A-  
24 Y. You're going to have difficulties preying on our  
25 seniors because we're going to make you go through a

1 little more before you evict a vulnerable unprotected  
2 senior citizen. So if we say HPD is going to be  
3 involved that's a powerful agency and you're going to  
4 have to deal with the Human Rights Commission, that's  
5 a powerful commission. Landlords may think twice  
6 before they even engage in unjustifiably and  
7 unscrupulously as you mentioned in your presentation  
8 evict seniors. You see it's, we're trying to prevent  
9 it from happening and that's why the, the added  
10 things and that's not a big tax on the city;  
11 notification. So we're trying to prevent and then if  
12 they don't go for the prevention that after they do  
13 it make it more protected for the seniors if they  
14 engage in the eviction in spite of all this. At least  
15 now the seniors will have some partners. And I know  
16 that the Department of the Aging and, and others are  
17 partners for seniors but in this eviction process and  
18 we can get you some numbers you probably already know  
19 the numbers in the amount of our seniors that have  
20 been evicted and didn't have a, any protection is  
21 going up and we want to put a stop to that trend.

22  
23 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: Understood. And I,  
24 I think you know we certainly agree with the intent  
25 and, and mission of, of the, the proposed

1  
2 legislation. I think what we would want to do is  
3 figure out a way to craft something that would, that  
4 would give, that, that would work for both ends and,  
5 and really you know create a mechanism that would  
6 either if, if it's us or if it's a different agency  
7 that collects the, the notice that it, it really  
8 works and it, it doesn't become too much of a fiscal  
9 impact.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Mr. Chair is it  
11 possible that if we do get together that we still  
12 have time to craft something...

13 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: I think I, just to  
14 follow up on that line of questioning you say  
15 currently there's a, a process in place that allows  
16 for the Marshal at the point of the eviction where  
17 it's already been ordered by the court so they, they  
18 one just in that process lose the opportunity for any  
19 type of legal intervention before it gets to the  
20 eviction process?

21 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: Right.

22 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: But at, but at that  
23 point it's clear that there's some either rule, law,  
24 or, or statute that requires the Marshals to notify  
25 DOI. I think potentially even at that stage what we

1 could do is put the owners on the city Marshals to  
2 also notify HPD since they have to notify DOI  
3 anyways. I mean DOI's core mission is not to protect  
4 seniors but I, I guess the reasoning behind the  
5 current policy is that they had to notify someone so  
6 that they can go out and investigate the situation to  
7 make sure that everything was done properly. That's  
8 probably the reasons why DOI was put in place. What,  
9 as it stands now while there is a process for the  
10 city is there any process that you know of that,  
11 where HPD collects data on evictions of elderly?  
12

13 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: HPD does not...

14 [interpose]

15 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Does not?

16 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: ...collect that data.

17 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: And I guess from an  
18 administrative standpoint you know I could see how  
19 that could be a little bit difficult if there's not  
20 process in place. And I also could see how somebody  
21 at the age of 62 or the age of 65 are, could also be  
22 still firm enough and strong enough to take care of  
23 themselves even though they're technically classified  
24 as a senior. But I think the spirit of what Council  
25 Member Barron is trying to do is to find a way and a

1  
2 mechanism to protect those that are truly are  
3 infirmed and truly can be preyed upon by the, the you  
4 know percent of, percentage of owners who are bad  
5 actors. We know not all of them are but we also know  
6 that bad actors do exist. So any thoughts or opinions  
7 on how such a mechanism could be put in place...

8 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: I mean I think to  
9 your point about the, the information or the notice  
10 already existing with Department of, of  
11 Investigations you know I, again because of the, the  
12 little time to prepare we haven't actually reached  
13 out to them.

14 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Sure.

15 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: So I think you know  
16 what would, it... [interpose]

17 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Or the city...

18 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: ...it would be in  
19 order.

20 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: ...or the city Marshals.

21 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: Or the city right.  
22 Exactly. So I think it would you know it would be  
23 great to have a conversation and see what kind of  
24 information can be shared. And then see if perhaps  
25 they already do some level of you know collecting



1  
2 and, and producing of that information and, and that,  
3 that could be turned into the report that's required.

4 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Yeah well I'm pretty  
5 sure DOI does something with it whether they share it  
6 or not is another... [interpose]

7 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: Right.

8 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: ...is another question.  
9 You know... Go ahead, go ahead Council Member Barron.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: See I don't, I  
11 don't want this protection of seniors to begin with  
12 the Marshal. You know if it starts with the Marshal  
13 then the landlord is let off the hook. We're talking  
14 about the bad actors. They're let off the hook  
15 because the Marshal already got everything done in  
16 court. If that landlord has to contact you and not  
17 just go straight to the Marshal we had eviction  
18 already. Go to the court and all of that. They have  
19 to contact you. See we want some onus on the landlord  
20 not just leaving it up to the Marshal and then you  
21 work with the Marshal and then Marshal come out and  
22 contact you. We trying to get it before it gets to  
23 the Marshal and see if the landlord has to go to you  
24 before any Marshal or anything else and Human Rights.  
25 Then our, our, our seniors are protected. By time you

1  
2 get on the Marshal level he's there to take them out.  
3 So it's just, he's going to inform you what he's  
4 going to do. We're trying to prevent it to getting to  
5 the Marshal level for them being evicted and already  
6 caught in all of that. If the landlord knew before I  
7 do all of that I got to contact HPD and this senior  
8 is going have protection of the Commission on Human  
9 Rights and then see if I'm justified in proceeding  
10 then you call the Marshal. You know not, not after  
11 the fact.

12 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: Completely  
13 understood. I think the, you know the other thing I  
14 want to note is that although the, the bill would  
15 require notice to HPD other than directing the, you  
16 know the potentially evicted tenant to legal  
17 resources we don't really have a role in that  
18 process.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Absolutely.

20 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: So perhaps an  
21 alternative could be you know working with DFTA to  
22 craft what would, what's also a provision of this  
23 bill a, a list of legal services that we could help  
24 distribute and make sure that senior citizen tenants  
25 around the city know exactly what resources are

1  
2 available to them before you know any instances of  
3 eviction happening.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: That would be  
5 helpful. That would be very helpful. But I'm really  
6 trying to get at the landlord given an extra  
7 responsibility to the landlord before they evict. You  
8 know right now they don't have to go straight to  
9 DFTA. The landlord before they evict, they don't have  
10 to do that. I mean that would be good to have that  
11 but if the landlord doesn't even let them know then  
12 it's on the senior to have to tell DFTA that they're  
13 being evicted. See I'm trying to get the landlord  
14 held accountable and responsible. So while that will  
15 be good if, I don't care who gives it to the seniors  
16 that information but it's the landlord has to know  
17 that before you prey on these seniors you're going to  
18 have to deal with HPD, the commission. It ain't going  
19 to be easy. They may think twice about even doing it.  
20 This would be a good preventive measure. And if they  
21 do do it seniors will be protected long before the  
22 Marshal gets there.

23 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: Understood and  
24 we're, and we're happy to... [interpose]

25 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Good.

1  
2 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: ...you know continue  
3 the conversation.

4 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Thank you and I, and I  
5 know you may not be prepared for this, this question  
6 but I guess you mentioned outreach to DOI but you,  
7 you also and I, we have to correct for the record in  
8 your testimony. You know that, you, you mentioned in  
9 your testimony that DOI turns the information over to  
10 Adult Protective Services so we should find out and  
11 clarify what the role of Adult Protective...

12 [interpose]

13 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: Right.

14 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: ...Services is and what  
15 in turn does the Adult Protective Services do with  
16 this information and how they move forward to protect  
17 senior citizens, senior citizens or the infirmed  
18 from, from evictions. I, I would imagine right now  
19 your current process on these evictions would be that  
20 of any other eviction of any other tenant of any  
21 other age at this point. They would have access to  
22 legal services if they go about it through housing  
23 court or any other means if they requested it? Is  
24 that current procedure?

25 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: Correct.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Okay. Alright I, I  
3 have you know no more questions if Council Member  
4 Barron... [interpose]

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Just want to  
6 understand again. I know that part of it. What does  
7 HPD do when an elderly person is evicted? What  
8 happens?

9 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: Well eviction is  
10 really... [interpose, crosstalk]

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Are you involved  
12 in... [crosstalk, interpose]

13 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: ...a matter of  
14 housing court.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Right.

16 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: So we... [interpose]

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: So you'd have no  
18 role in... [interpose]

19 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: We don't have a  
20 role. You know if, if there's instances of harassment  
21 we can certainly through our housing litigation  
22 division you know review the, the cases but there is  
23 no official role for us to, to play because it is,  
24 it's, it's a landlord tenant issue right.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: The harassment  
3 role was an authority given to... [interpose]

4 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: Right.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: ...you by this  
6 institution.

7 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: Who would have a  
8 role if it is a rent stabilized apartment is state  
9 HCR would have a, a role to, to play if there is a  
10 wrongful eviction.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Has an elderly  
12 person ever came to y'all about eviction problems and  
13 what have you done with, if they had.

14 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: I'd, I'm sure that  
15 has happened before it, it, you know in that instance  
16 what we would do is we would direct them to a, a  
17 local non-profit that... [interpose]

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Right...

19 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: ...provides legal  
20 services.

21 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Okay.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: But, excuse me...

23 [pause]

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: This is my staff  
25 person. This is Joyce Simmons. My Chief of Staff

1  
2 wanted to know if they're any programs in HPD for  
3 senior citizens that are on a fixed income and they  
4 can't afford the market rents or places out there  
5 that have rents that are way beyond their, their  
6 fixed income?

7 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Well you know I'm, I'm  
8 allow it but Charles that is off topic.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: I know. I know.

10 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: So it, that, you get  
11 that one and that's it.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: That's it.

13 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Yeah.

14 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: So I, so you know  
15 there, there is an existing for new construction of  
16 senior housing. There's an existing 202 program  
17 through federal government, through HUD that  
18 unfortunately is unfunded right now.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Right.

20 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: And it, it  
21 basically provides a, a rental subsidy in addition to  
22 financing for construction of senior housing.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Alright got it.

24 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: Then there's also  
25 SCRIE with the Department of Finance... [interpose]

1

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Right.

2

3

CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: ...that does provide  
a, a fixed rent for senior citizens.

4

5

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Right.

6

CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Alright great so you  
know we certainly thank you for coming and, and  
providing testimony. I think all parties involved  
whether it be owners, this city, members, legal  
service, advocates, I, I believe agree that we should  
provide the, the most amount of services for the  
elderly in, in their late years and, and, and, so  
that they can continue to be able to afford to live  
in the city. The question is what is the mechanism to  
get us there? You know hopefully we can figure out  
something that works before the 19<sup>th</sup> if not it will  
be left to either the next council or, or some other  
entity to... [interpose]

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COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Don't say that.

20

CHAIRPERSON DILAN: ...to figure that out.

21

[laughter] It's the reality Charles.

22

[laughter, background comments]

23

CHAIRPERSON DILAN: So thanks. Thanks.

24

[laughter] You have somebody that you know is coming  
back. You know so thanks for your time and your

25



1  
2 testimony and really have to say, I really  
3 appreciated working with HPD during my eight years  
4 from current HUD secretary Donovan to current  
5 commissioner Visnauskas, at least she's the only  
6 commissioner not to appear. But she, she's only had a  
7 couple of months. We certainly wish all of you well.  
8 It's been a pleasure working with the agency. So I  
9 want to thank you for coming.

10 CHRISTOPHER GONZALEZ: Likewise. Thank you  
11 very much and the best of luck.

12 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: So with that I believe  
13 we have two people signed up to testify. Yeah what,  
14 what I'm going to do is I'll call up Frank Ricci from  
15 RSA to come up and provide testimony and then I'll,  
16 after Frank will be Aurore DeCarlo from the Legal Aid  
17 Society so...

18 FRANK RICCI: Thank you Chairman Dilan,  
19 Council Member Barron. My name's Frank Ricci. I'm the  
20 Director of Government Affairs for the Rent  
21 Stabilization Association. We are the trade  
22 association that represents approximately 25 thousand  
23 building owners who collectively have about a million  
24 apartments in the city. I'm here to, our position on  
25 this bill is that conceptionally we don't have a

1  
2 problem with it. Because for building owners they  
3 don't want to go to court. And when they do go to  
4 court especially in a holdover proceeding which is  
5 what this bill addresses. It doesn't seem to address  
6 nonpayments only holdovers. Those are lengthy  
7 processes. Those are eight, nine month trials usually  
8 because you're asking for possession of the  
9 apartment. You're not asking for payment of rent. So  
10 anything that's going to speed that process up so  
11 that both sides are represented so you don't have  
12 needless adjournments so that tenants and owners  
13 especially small ones don't have to take days off  
14 from work and constantly appear and reappear to  
15 resolve whatever the issue is and I, I know you spoke  
16 about your constituent Ms. Rice. I don't know what  
17 the specifics are but for everyone involved in  
18 something like that the sooner it's resolved by the  
19 judge who's the only person really in power to say if  
20 an eviction is justified or not it works for both  
21 sides to have an expedited process. So I do have to  
22 take issue with you Councilman Barron. My problem  
23 with this bill is the logistics not the concept. The  
24 owners don't know if a tenant is 62 years old or not.  
25 They really don't.

1 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Should.

2 FRANK RICCI: And there's a lot of people  
3 who are borderline who don't look 62. You can guess  
4 my age if you want but I bet you're going to be  
5 wrong.  
6

7 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: You're 75.

8 FRANK RICCI: You're right.

9 [laughter]

10 FRANK RICCI: No but I, I could be a  
11 senior citizen. So given that, I mean owners really  
12 don't. So that's the first logistical problem. And  
13 maybe to resolve that because I, I think HPD and both  
14 of you talked around a little bit. Maybe one place  
15 that might get you not 100 percent of what you want  
16 but very close is if you have a senior citizen and  
17 they're on SCRIE which means they're 62, they're rent  
18 controlled, they're rent stabilized, and they have an  
19 annual income of under 30 thousand dollars or  
20 somewhere around that, it changes every year a little  
21 bit. I mean that is your most vulnerable population.  
22 They have to renew their SCRIE certificate every year  
23 so why Department of Finance when they get their new  
24 certificate each year can't send a notice along with  
25 it listing of all the possible you know whether it's

1  
2 legal aid or any group that might be able to  
3 represent a tenant. That I think gets you closer to  
4 where you want to go. But I should also tell you  
5 that, that I don't know what good it would do for an  
6 own, and, and you're right also. I mean you're  
7 talking about Marshals and DOI, that's the end of the  
8 process, that's after seven to eight months. It's way  
9 too late by then to help a senior who really needs  
10 help or at least get representation by the time  
11 you're that far down the road. It would be better for  
12 everyone concerned if that help came at the very  
13 beginning of the process. So serving HPD I don't know  
14 how you would serve HPD. I think it would, I, I just  
15 think it would be a meaningless exercise and might  
16 even lead to more delays in court because then  
17 someone could say well they didn't serve HPD and, and  
18 then you'd have to subpoena the agency to come and  
19 prove they were served properly. Right now in housing  
20 court as, as far as I know in every housing court  
21 there are help desks set the first time someone gets  
22 a notice of eviction and they have to appear in quit.  
23 OCA, The Office of Court Administration, OCA actually  
24 provides clerks and help desks to help people with  
25 that. Whether they qualify or not is a different

1  
2 issue. But I know a lot of that information already  
3 exists there. That could be bolstered up but that  
4 would take I believe state legislation to do that. So  
5 having said that you know we're more than happy to  
6 continue to talk about this subject and as I said our  
7 problems are logistical problems not conceptual  
8 problems.

9 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: I think you gave  
10 Charles his first piece of state legislation.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Right I was saying  
12 I'll take care of that when I get to the state.

13 FRANK RICCI: Well, would be more than  
14 happy to work with you on that.

15 [laughter]

16 FRANK RICCI: I, I do Albany too.

17 [laughter]

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: It doesn't seem as  
19 though we're that far apart... [interpose]

20 FRANK RICCI: No, no.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: ...from what you  
22 presented. I do disagree with you. There are ways you  
23 can find out the age of a, the landlord can find out  
24 the age of the tenant. I think that that could  
25 happen. I don't think that's a major... But see the

1  
2 good part of it is that usually you're evicting  
3 somebody for nonpayment of rent or whatever. So if we  
4 contact, so you have to notify HPD but it's no big  
5 deal. People can make a big deal out of something  
6 they don't want to do and say it's all of this. But  
7 if we did contact HPD and others and looked at the  
8 reasons why the eviction is happening with those  
9 agencies and their resources, extra resources  
10 involved beyond DFTA and some of the other agencies  
11 or perhaps whatever the interest of the landlord was  
12 around that apartment could be better run and I think  
13 that's where my Chief of Staff Joyce Simmons was  
14 getting at there's maybe some other resources that  
15 the elderly are not aware of that HPD has so then we  
16 may not even have to go to court that things can be  
17 resolved before it gets to the Marshal in court and  
18 all that stuff.

19 FRANK RICCI: I think then there's a flaw  
20 in your bill if that's your intention because your  
21 bill does not address nonpayments it's only...

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: No, no we're,  
23 we're not, we're saying eviction of the elderly you  
24 know whatever the...

1  
2 FRANK RICCI: Well but you're, it's a term  
3 of ardent and the way you're bill is written it only  
4 pertains to recovering possession of, of a, a unit  
5 not for a nonpayment. So I think you would need to  
6 amend it to, to show that.

7 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: I, I just want to, we  
8 may be wrapping up. I just want to acknowledge that  
9 we've been joined by Council Member Mendez.

10 [crosstalk]

11 FRANK RICCI: One other thing you know in  
12 court routinely judges when they see a senior citizen  
13 who needs help I, I can't remember if it's called in  
14 article 81 or 881 or something like that but, but in  
15 those procedures judges often will appoint an  
16 attorney to represent a, a senior citizen tenant if  
17 they believe that the, that the tenant doesn't have  
18 the requisite knowledge or is being taken advantage.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Oh no doubt that  
20 everything that exists is not working. So we wouldn't  
21 do this bill if they had the judges and everything we  
22 talk about in this bill is a duplication,

23 FRANK RICCI: Councilman...

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: and everything's  
25 fine and this is a waste of time. Well obviously all

1  
2 of that, that the HPD mentioned, that you mentioned  
3 is not working because some elderly tenants are  
4 getting a bad deal and we could have paraded them in  
5 here but this is some last minute, we're trying to  
6 get this through before the end of the year but it's  
7 not working. See everything that you mentioned, the  
8 assistants when they go to court and they mentioned  
9 it, Marshal has to notify DOI, and all of that it is  
10 not working. So there's a need for something else to  
11 happen. This is meager. [crosstalk]

12 FRANK RICCI: All, all I can tell you is  
13 that housing court doesn't work for owners either.  
14 It's the last place an owner wants to go and spend  
15 time and spend money on attorney and lose rent. So if  
16 there were a way that, that tenants could be helped  
17 ahead of time before you even get to that we're all  
18 for it.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Alright.

20 [pause]

21 [background comments]

22 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Council Member Mendez.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: My apologies I'm  
24 back and forth between the other hearing. So I came  
25 in late but it sounds like you think there's some



1  
2 merits to this and that housing court is problematic  
3 for anyone senior whether you're owner or a tenant.  
4 Is that correct.

5 FRANK RICCI: You don't have to be a  
6 senior but it's, housing court's problematic. We  
7 don't have... [interpose]

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: More problematic  
9 for seniors.

10 FRANK RICCI: What, what I said on the  
11 record was we don't have a problem with the concept  
12 of providing more information to tenants when they  
13 get to court or before they get to court because if  
14 it means they're going to be properly represented  
15 that means less adjournments, the judge can get to  
16 the heart of the matter that much sooner and resolve  
17 it whatever it is whether it's in favor of the owner  
18 or in favor of the tenant. And I'm not saying either  
19 side is you know completely made up of saints or  
20 villains but it's up to the judge to resolve it. So  
21 my problems with the bill were logistical ones as to  
22 how you, I don't know if serving HPD with a notice 24  
23 hours ahead of time gets you to where you want to go.  
24 I made a suggestion that maybe at least with the SCIE  
25 population that, that when they do their annual

1  
2 recertification that they could receive a notice in  
3 addition to that that lists agencies or entities that  
4 would provide them with legal help should they need  
5 it.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Okay thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Thank you. We've also  
8 been joined by Council Member Melissa Mark-Viverito  
9 of Manhattan. If there are no more questions we'd  
10 like to thank you for your time, for your testimony.  
11 And the final witness is and correct me if I'm saying  
12 this incorrectly Aurore DeCarlo.

13 AURORE DECARLO: That's correct thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Correct and I'm, I'm  
15 proud of myself that I got that right. Please say  
16 your name in your own voice before you provide your  
17 testimony and you can begin when you are ready.

18 AURORE DECARLO: Aurore DeCarlo from the  
19 Attorney in Charge of the Legal Aid Society's  
20 Brooklyn Office for the Aging. Good morning Chair  
21 Dilan and committee members. Thank you for giving me  
22 the opportunity to provide feedback on Intro 475. As  
23 currently drafted the proposed local law requires  
24 landlords to notify HPD about individual eviction  
25 proceedings against someone 62 or older so as to

1 connect those seniors to needed legal services. This  
2 is a welcome development for legal providers serving  
3 the senior population and I do, I want to thank the  
4 council members for their efforts particularly  
5 Council Member Barron in finding protective measures  
6 for those who are most vulnerable to the devastating  
7 impacts of eviction from one's home. The written  
8 testimony that we've provided goes into detail about  
9 the services that the legal aid society provides city  
10 wide. I just want to focus a bit on the Brooklyn's  
11 Office - experience in serving seniors. Thank you.  
12 Just to describe what we've seen with regards to the  
13 seniors that we served. The office's - area is the  
14 entire borough of Brooklyn which is home to well over  
15 400 thousand residents aged 60 and over. Using a team  
16 of lawyers, social workers, paralegals, volunteer  
17 attorneys, and support staff our office provides an  
18 interdisciplinary and comprehensive approach in order  
19 to tackle the myriad of legal problems faced by  
20 seniors. In our office a large percentage of the  
21 applicants for our service are seniors facing  
22 eviction many of them from their long term homes. We  
23 have seen nothing but an increase in eviction  
24 proceedings against seniors. Given the booming real  
25

1 estate market in Brooklyn where many neighborhoods  
2 have undergone rapid gentrification it's not  
3 surprising to see that increase. As landlords try to  
4 evict long term tenants particularly rent regulated  
5 ones who are often seniors. We often see landlords  
6 commencing nonpayment and holdover proceedings  
7 against elderly tenants who participate in rent  
8 subsidy programs such as section eight and SCIE.  
9 These are crucial programs that allow seniors with  
10 fixed incomes to maintain affordable rents and remain  
11 in their long term homes. But rather than complying  
12 with the subsidy program requirements or rectifying  
13 problems that cause a lapse in subsidy payments what  
14 we see are landlords resorting immediately to  
15 eviction proceedings. Throughout 2013 our office has  
16 provided legal services to seniors in close to 920  
17 housing relating matters including services in over  
18 480 summary eviction proceedings. In 2012 we provided  
19 services in over 960 housing matters including  
20 services in over 500 summary eviction proceedings.  
21 Again, against only seniors. Whatever the cause of an  
22 eviction proceeding given the frailty that often  
23 accompanies old age along with the frequent presence  
24 of physical and mental impairments and the absence of  
25

1 family or community support systems the resolution of  
2 these cases is often very labor intensive. Our staff  
3 is likely to have to assist the senior citizen not  
4 simply in housing court but also with untangling  
5 related government benefit problems and social work  
6 issues. Because of the highly labor intensive and  
7 complicated nature of these cases it is absolutely  
8 crucial for us to be able to get involved at an early  
9 stage so as to most adequately and comprehensively  
10 address these seniors needs. The longer a senior  
11 continues prosaic in a summary eviction proceeding  
12 the more likely that senior will, will unknowingly  
13 waive important rights, agree to uncontainable  
14 settlement terms, be cowed into vacating or  
15 surrendering their home, or simply not appear to  
16 defend themselves at all. And for this reason Intros  
17 475 is a valuable development as a tool to link  
18 seniors to needed legal services as early as  
19 possible. I just want as a final point to describe a  
20 recent case our office worked on so as to highlight  
21 how critically important it is for seniors facing  
22 eviction to be provided with early legal  
23 intervention. Our client Ms. V. was a, is a woman in  
24 her early 70s who only speaks Spanish and lives with  
25

1  
2 three of her minor grandchildren in her home of  
3 almost 40 years. Ms. V. believes she was receiving  
4 FEPS a rent subsidy for families but the subsidy had  
5 been terminated and she fell behind in rent as a  
6 result. In addition she was the victim of abuse at  
7 the hands of her, her estranged husband who stole  
8 money orders from her causing her to further  
9 accumulate arrears. Her landlord commenced of a  
10 nonpayment eviction proceeding against her almost  
11 immediately. She was not, she had, was not made aware  
12 of any available legal services during her time in  
13 court and she had no income to hire a private  
14 attorney. She... [interpose]

15 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Excuse me. Excuse me a  
16 second.

17 AURORE DECARLO: Yep.

18 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: We've been joined by  
19 Council Member James of Brooklyn.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: I'm sorry.

21 AURORE DECARLO: She entered into a final  
22 judgment stipulation which provided her with very  
23 little time to pay the arrears. She didn't know how  
24 to apply for a rent arrears grant from the city,  
25 didn't know how to effectively negotiate for more

1 time to pay, or how to raise available defenses.  
2 Eventually she failed to satisfy the judgment on time  
3 and, and an eviction was enforced. Ms. V. and her  
4 grandchildren were separated while they had to stay  
5 with friends and slept on couches or floors. It was  
6 only after they had been evicted that she and her  
7 family contacted our office and sought assistance. We  
8 immediately filed an order to show cause to get Ms.  
9 V. and her grandchildren restored to possession,  
10 submitted an application and advocated with the HRA  
11 for a one shot deal and provided Ms. V. with social  
12 work services to set up direct payments and financial  
13 management to avoid future lags in rent payment.  
14 Within one week's time we were able to get this  
15 family back in their home, satisfy all the arrears  
16 owed, and provide ongoing social work services. Had  
17 she been made aware of the legal aid society at the  
18 commencement of the eviction preceding she and her  
19 family could have avoided the many months of  
20 extraordinary stress and the enormous trauma of  
21 eviction. We commend the council's efforts in  
22 drafting laws that will help connect vulnerable  
23 seniors like Ms. V. to needed legal services at the  
24 commencement of eviction proceedings and not at the  
25

1  
2 end. Early legal interventions on these seniors'  
3 behalf can stave off the devastating impacts of  
4 onerous and daunting litigation not to mention very  
5 expensive litigation and potential eviction while  
6 also stabilizing seniors' homes, health, financial  
7 independence, and lives. We're happy to provide any  
8 further input on Intro 430, 435 and any other efforts  
9 to connect seniors to critical legal services.

10 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Thank you.

11 AURORE DECARLO: Thank you for time.

12 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Thank you and we've  
13 also been joined by Council Member Elizabeth Crowley  
14 of Queens. I just have on brief question. And you,  
15 you said something that I believe is true and I think  
16 you also said something that many of my colleagues  
17 who are remaining may not realize. You said it  
18 indirectly. You know certainly we have you know the  
19 class of bad actors who are landlords who own the  
20 buildings who, who conduct in this activity towards  
21 elderly tenants but I did. What, what, what I'm  
22 starting to see in my district because of the  
23 increased real estate speculation and I believe some  
24 of my colleagues have, have already seen it in their  
25 districts for the same reason is basically a class of



1  
2 investors, people who really have no equity in, in  
3 the neighborhoods beyond the, the speculated value of  
4 the homes also conducting in this activity with  
5 seniors. While that may be a, a topic for another  
6 hearing at another time you know this council  
7 certainly has seen that in the past with larger  
8 multiple dwellings as it, as it relates to predatory  
9 equity. But you're starting to see it now in much  
10 smaller units in, in neighborhoods that are perceived  
11 to be up and coming. So with that I will state my,  
12 my, my question would be how did you collect your  
13 data and how were you able to get your information? I  
14 believe I know the answer but I think if, if, if you  
15 can do it certainly a city agency is also capable of  
16 doing it. So I just wanted to start by asking you  
17 that simple question.

18 AUREORE DECARLO: Certainly. We keep track  
19 of all of the... [interpose]

20 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Your casework?

21 AUREORE DECARLO: Yes of all our casework  
22 and all of the applicants for our services and what  
23 their issues are and, and of certainly the services  
24 that we provide them. So the numbers are drawn  
25 entirely from our own records and database.

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CHAIRPERSON DILAN: So now my follow-up question because I got to image if the agency was sitting next to you they would say we don't take the amount of input on cases for legal services that a legal service entity would do. Now I guess just speaking for your agency or your, your entity that you work for would you have a problem on a quarterly basis or a semiannual basis reporting data on elderly evictions towards the city agency, sharing that...

[interpose]

AUORE DECARLO: No absolutely not.

CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Absolutely.

AUORE DECARLO: I mean we have to...

[interpose]

CHAIRPERSON DILAN: You would have to...

[interpose]

AUORE DECARLO: ...retain confidentiality of... [interpose]

CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Yeah.

AUORE DECARLO: ...of the clients' identities and... [interpose]

CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Of course but...

[interpose]

1  
2 AURORE DECARLO: ...and we, we in fact do  
3 supply... [interpose]

4 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: ...statistical data you...  
5 [crosstalk, interpose]

6 AURORE DECARLO: We give that statistical  
7 data to, to DFTA, to the Department for the Aging.

8 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: To DFTA?

9 AURORE DECARLO: Mm-hmm.

10 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Okay. But you would  
11 have, it, it would be no further burden on you  
12 administratively to share that with HPD?

13 AURORE DECARLO: Absolutely not. No.

14 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: And I know you can  
15 only maybe speak on your behalf and your agency but  
16 do you perceive that to be further difficulty on any  
17 of your other colleagues in the legal service arena?

18 AURORE DECARLO: I would have... [interpose]

19 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: It's a, it's a  
20 perception.

21 AURORE DECARLO: I would imagine not.

22 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: It's, it's a  
23 perception. I'm not asking you to speak for them. I  
24 know that may be difficult for you. So you can see a  
25 mechanical mechanism as to how this could possibly

1  
2 take place with HPD, receiving the information from  
3 legal service entities as sort of an intake and and  
4 input an information sharing entity where they aren't  
5 required to collect the data because you already  
6 collecting it.

7 AURORE DECARLO: Yes I think where we see  
8 the enormous value in a law of this kind whether its  
9 final form is as is is connecting the seniors to  
10 legal services at a much earlier stage.

11 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Yeah that was my  
12 follow up. That, that's where there shortfall will  
13 be.

14 AURORE DECARLO: And that saves..  
15 [interpose]

16 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Yeah.

17 AURORE DECARLO: ...an extraordinary number  
18 of resource, amount of resources, of money on every,  
19 for, on everyone's part.

20 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Yeah well your  
21 shortfall would be you couldn't provide data on  
22 anyone that didn't come across your office.

23 AURORE DECARLO: We would not be able to  
24 provide that data.

1  
2 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: You, you would not,  
3 you would not be able... [interpose]

4 AURORE DECARLO: No.

5 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: ...to provide it.

6 AURORE DECAROLO: And I, and we think, we  
7 believe that they're, that's a significant number of  
8 people... [interpose]

9 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Yeah I believe it.

10 AURORE DECARLO: ...that we don't see.

11 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: I believe so too  
12 because just as Charles' constituent who's 94 years  
13 old couldn't make it here today I would imagine that  
14 there's many elderly and infirm seniors that simply  
15 can't make the appearance at housing court and I  
16 think most people knows what happens if you can't  
17 make it there into housing.

18 AURORE DECARLO: And I think... Yeah I think  
19 that's where the value in such, this kind of  
20 notification is tremendous because there are many  
21 seniors that never name it to housing court and so  
22 they aren't going to reach any resources that are  
23 provided in housing courts that may link them to  
24 legal services. They never make it there in the first

1  
2 place. To receive notification at their home could  
3 make a, a huge difference.

4 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Alright thank you. I  
5 think that that's you know really all I have. I don't  
6 know if my colleagues I'll let you take whatever they  
7 want to add. And I, I have to ask my colleagues if,  
8 if one member can indulge me. I do have a personal  
9 matter that I need to attend to that's urgent. This  
10 is the last witness. If a member could close it out  
11 in, in my absence I really would appreciate that. So  
12 thank you Council Member Barron and thank you all.

13 AUREORE DECARLO: Thank you.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Well thank you  
15 very much before you. Thank you for the hearing and I  
16 appreciate you showing the interest that you have in  
17 really trying to get this in.

18 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: I represent senior  
19 citizens.

20 [laughter]

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Yeah. I, I  
22 appreciate it very much. And I'm hoping the committee  
23 could pass it out regardless of all of this. But  
24 anyway that's another discussion.

25 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Yes it is.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: I thank you. Your  
3 testimony was extremely valuable because it, it takes  
4 it on a broader level around gentrification.

5 AURORE DECARLO: Mm-hmm.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: A broader level  
7 around the housing issues we have in our  
8 neighborhoods when we have powerful landlords that  
9 want to take out seniors who are on fixed income,  
10 take out people are on subsidized housing programs  
11 and rent stabilization because it doesn't maximize  
12 the kind of profits that landlords want to make  
13 around this whole housing question. So, and I think a  
14 lot of the stuff that we heard from those  
15 representing the landlords and HPD it wasn't nothing  
16 insurmountable. It wasn't nothing.. This bill is not  
17 one of them revolutionary bills that you know would  
18 cause a massive amount of money or changes in things.  
19 And, and, and you got at the heart of what we're  
20 trying to get at here. And that's the earliest  
21 intervention, the earliest legal intervention that's  
22 possible because I've seen too many seniors go  
23 through just those things that you're saying. I wish  
24 Ms. Rice would have been here to tell you the  
25 horrific story that she has and what she had to go

1 through. So I mean simply to say that you have to  
2 contact, we have difficulties finding out who's a  
3 senior in your building, well we could help you with  
4 that. And the, and that they have to contact HPD at a  
5 early as possible and even the Commission on Human  
6 Rights because housing is a human right. It's a human  
7 right. Everybody has a right to house and especially  
8 our elderly. So if they have these two agencies with  
9 all of their resources intervening at the earliest  
10 stages I think that we can really make a dent. So I  
11 thank you for your testimony and if you could give  
12 your information to my staff when we call for a  
13 meeting with HPD and the landlord folk perhaps we can  
14 either pass it as it is... I hope the committee you  
15 know worse come to worse and pass it as it is and let  
16 them deal with it. Because the priority to me is our  
17 seniors. But hopefully you can be in those meetings  
18 with us so if there's any tweaks to the legislation  
19 it would be tweaked with someone who has good  
20 knowledge on what will remain effective and what will  
21 be watered down to nothing because we don't want that  
22 to happen.

24 AURORE DECARLO: We'd be very happy...

25 [interpose]



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COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Yes. Mm-hmm.

AUORE DECARLO: ...to. Thank you. And thank you very much for your efforts on behalf of seniors.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Mm-hmm. Thank you for your testimony.

COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: This item is laid over and the hearing is adjourned thank you.

[gavel]

[background comments]

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 December 29, 2013