

**NYC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TESTIMONY
ON ILLEGAL PARKING AND BIKE LANES AND INTRO. 2159 BEFORE THE CITY
COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION**

January 12, 2021

Good morning Chair Rodriguez and members of the Transportation Committee. I am Margaret Forgione, Acting Commissioner of the Department of Transportation. I am joined by Eric Beaton Deputy Commissioner for Transportation Planning and Management and Rebecca Zack, Assistant Commissioner for Intergovernmental and Community Affairs. On the topic of enforcement we are also joined by NYPD Chief of Transportation Kim Royster. And we are joined by John Castelli, OATH's Deputy Commissioner for Legislative Affairs. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of Mayor Bill de Blasio on illegal parking and bike lanes, as well as Intro. 2159.

First, let me say that I am incredibly honored to have the opportunity to serve as DOT Acting Commissioner. I believe so strongly in this agency and what we are capable of accomplishing. Throughout my years here I have been impressed each and every day by our team's unfailing dedication to this city. I look forward to leading the agency during this time, under the Mayor's leadership, and working with you, Chair Rodriguez, and the whole Council, as we continue our critical work, and to help New York City recover from this challenging year.

I also want to thank Commissioner Trottenberg for her leadership over the past seven years. We were lucky to have had someone at the helm with her vision, passion for improving transportation options across the five boroughs, and deep expertise, and together we accomplished so much during her tenure. I know the whole Department wishes her all the best in her future endeavors.

Before discussing the legislation in front of the City Council today, I want to acknowledge that 2020 was a difficult year for our city and country—and we all know the road ahead is challenging. The pandemic took the lives of far too many New Yorkers, brought on an economic fallout that forced many businesses to close, and put many New Yorkers out of work.

It was also a challenging year for Vision Zero. During the unprecedented events of 2020, drivers across the city took advantage of emptier streets to speed recklessly, a phenomenon reported nationwide. Unfortunately, this trend in speeding had deadly consequences, and contributed to an increase in motorcyclist and motor vehicle occupant fatalities, including many late-night crashes with operators who were inexperienced or unlicensed, and too often racing on our streets in unregistered vehicles.

On the other hand, 2020 fortunately had record low pedestrian deaths, including the longest period without a pedestrian fatality since we began tracking fatalities by mode in 1983. And while bicycle fatalities are tragically still too high, the number held effectively steady last year even as we saw a huge increase in cyclists on our streets, which translates to fewer serious crashes per trip.

I am proud we continued keeping more vulnerable street users alive and safe despite the significant operational challenges posed by the pandemic and the resource constraints of the City's massive fiscal crisis. We installed our highest number ever of new protected bike lanes: 28.6 miles. And, we continued to expand the speed camera program, installing more speed cameras in 2020 than in the first six years of the program combined, with now over 1,300 speed cameras active across 750 school speed zones citywide.

We also reimagined our streets to meet the needs of the moment. We created 83 miles of Open Streets to give people more space to social distance and get outside. We established the Open Restaurants program through which over 10,800 restaurants have set up outdoors on the city's roadways and sidewalks. And we installed a record number of new bus lanes, 16.3 miles, to shorten commute times for the City's essential workers, many of whom travel by bus.

Looking ahead, we will continue to follow the data in our efforts to make the city's streets safer. We will combat increased speeding with tools that are proven to be effective. Our latest speed camera report made clear what we already knew: speed cameras save lives. But in 2020, 36 percent of non-highway fatalities occurred in school speed zones during hours when cameras could not issue tickets, specifically, overnight and on weekends. We must leverage this life-saving technology to the greatest extent possible, and as the Mayor announced, the City is calling on the State to amend the speed camera law and allow us to keep speed cameras on 24/7. And, as the Mayor said we will have more to say soon on the aggressive strategies we are employing as we continue expanding Vision Zero.

Introduction 2159

Now, turning to Intro. 2159, co-sponsored by Council Member Levin and Speaker Johnson. This bill would create a new hazardous parking violation for obstructing a bike lane, bus lane, sidewalk, crosswalk, or hydrant adjudicated at OATH as well as a new citizen complaint system for these violations.

Compliance with our traffic and parking rules is essential, whether by private, commercial, for-hire, or government vehicles. Otherwise, our streets cannot function properly for all street users, and safety, mobility, and emergency response can all be negatively affected. So we are always open to exploring new models to enhance safety and help our street designs function most effectively.

We support the intent and the creativity of the bill. But, while it is an idea with understandable appeal, we believe it would be of limited effectiveness in ensuring compliance while requiring substantial resources on the part of DOT and our sister agencies to stand up, and therefore oppose this legislation as drafted. We also have significant concerns about implementing such a program, and it would take much longer to do so than allowed for in the current bill.

First, we have significant concerns about the potential that citizen enforcement could lead to conflicts between motorists and citizen complainants. For NYPD's TEAs, we know that despite the legal protection and authority of being uniformed agents, there are typically dozens of cases of assault filed each year. Under this program, people who are not perceived to have any authority would submit complaints, and we are concerned that this could lead to many verbal and

physical confrontations—pitting neighbor against neighbor—causing personal conflicts and safety risks.

Second, most parking violations are handled at the Parking Violation Bureau, and we believe it is inadvisable to create a program involving parking summonses that are adjudicated at OATH, which could be difficult for the City to collect, and thus not cost effective. As drafted and conceived, the bill raises legal and logistical questions that need to be explored further.

Third, DOT is committed to a data driven approach to all things under Vision Zero, from our street improvement projects, to enforcement, to education, by focusing on the locations and driver behaviors associated with the most deaths and serious injuries. This approach allows us to have the greatest impact, and it builds in more equity, by making sure the benefits of Vision Zero are not skewed to the communities that are the loudest or have the most community capacity to advocate for street safety. In contrast, we are concerned that while it would take very significant upfront effort for us to set up, this program would have an uneven impact, reaching some neighborhoods more than others.

As we know the City faces an ongoing budget crisis. We operate under severe resource constraints, while at the same time stretching our capacity in every possible way. We must respond to the dramatic evolution of our streets amidst the ongoing pandemic, while continuing to address the urgency of eliminating traffic fatalities, and meet so many other urgent demands on the agency. So we must prioritize our efforts towards the most proven, effective, and promising strategies.

And regardless of the concerns we are raising, this proposal would require staffing, up-front investment in IT, legal work to make rules and evidence guidelines for multiple types of offenses, as well as capacity and effort by OATH, and all requiring significant time to stand up.

When it comes to enforcement of our bike lanes and other safety-critical curb regulations, automated enforcement, using bike lane cameras, could be a very useful and powerful tool. As we called for in our *Green Wave* plan back in 2019, DOT is interested in exploring these applications, and the possibility of obtaining the necessary state authority to pilot them.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I want to thank the Council for the opportunity to testify before you today. I look forward to working together during this final year of the de Blasio Administration and your term as Transportation Chair, Council Member Rodriguez. I know together we will be effective towards our shared goal of safety, while building on the transformative reimagining of our streets during this unprecedented time. We would now be happy to answer any questions.



New York City Council Hearing
Transportation Committee Hearing
Illegal Parking and Bike Lanes Int 2159-2020
January 12, 2021
Testimony of Melodie Bryant with Family Statement for Madison Lyden
Families for Safe Streets

My name is Melodie Bryant and I'm a member of Families For Safe Streets. I'll be reading a statement of Amanda Lyden, whose daughter Madison, was killed on Central Park West when a driver blocked the painted bike lane, forcing Madison to veer into traffic where she was struck by a truck driver. Amanda lives in Australia and, because of the time difference, cannot participate herself.

It has been my honor, with founding member Dana Lerner, to take care of Madison's memorial bike. We adorn it with photos of Madison and her family, poems they have written and ribbons they have sent with messages for her. We take it down for the Thanksgiving Day Parade, restore it, bring cards and flowers for Madison's birthday, and take photos to send to her family in Australia, so that they know Madison is not - will never be - forgotten. This year, she would have been 25-years-old.

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Statement from Amanda Berry, mother of Madison Lyden (9/10/95 - 8/10/18)

I still cannot comprehend that my daughter Madison is no longer with us, no longer gracing this earth with her infectious laughter, her inner and outer beauty. Madi was so loud and clumsy, she asked sooo many questions, her thirst for knowledge was unlimited.

I could talk forever about her endless qualities and her zest for life. Madison was 23. She had saved for the trip of a lifetime and traveled from Australia to see the world. She went to so many islands and countries — Japan, the Philippines, and then the most exciting...America!

She had just graduated with Honours after studying psychology for four years. She wanted to do so many things with her degree to help people, but she didn't get the opportunity to even apply for the master's program she had hoped to attend.

Madison was killed in New York while she was cycling in a bike lane on Central Park West. She was hit from behind by a truck driver after swerving out of the bike lane as an

Uber driver was obstructing it. Her best friend Pam witnessed the whole thing but she could only scream.

I relive it in my mind constantly and have regular nightmares, always worried that she suffered. Since the crash that claimed her precious life, I became severely depressed and suffer from PTSD.

I am not the only one suffering a lifetime without her. Her dad Andrew is terribly broken as well as Madison's three siblings, a big brother and two sisters. Paige is Madison's identical twin sister. They were meant to be together always. Madi also has a huge family and a huge network of friends and colleagues and so many are suffering because of her death. Our hometown lowered the flags to half-mast in her memory. Pam now has had that horrific event shape her in ways we will never know.

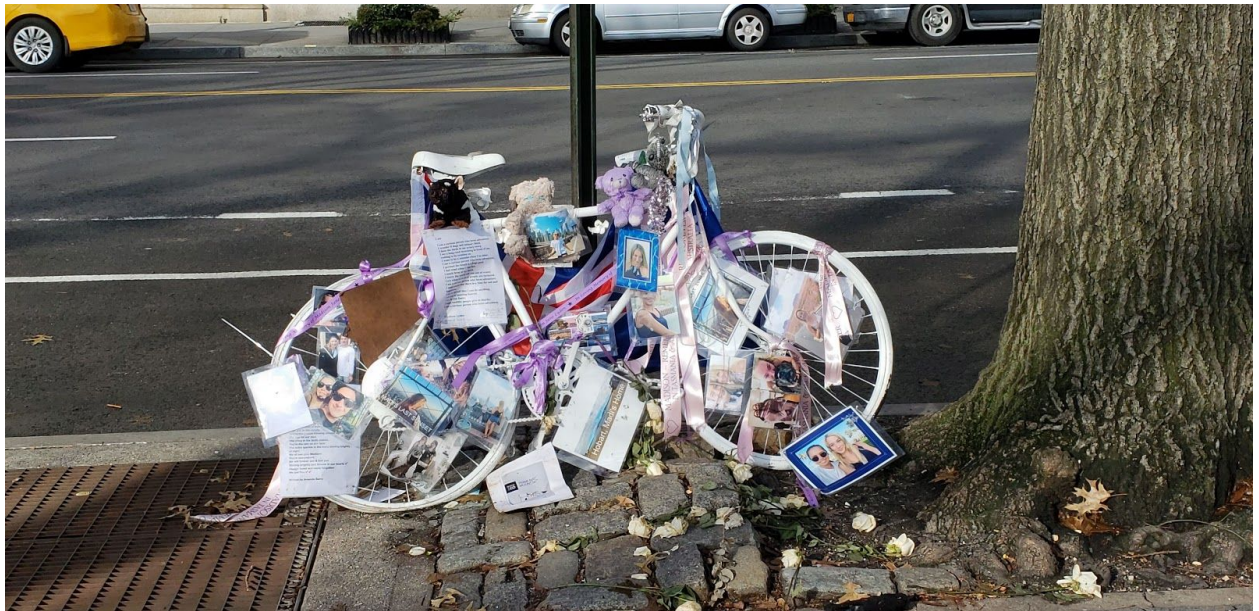
You just don't pick up the pieces no matter how hard you try or pretend. Our friends and family can see we are just not the same anymore. We never will be. The what if's always go through my mind. If that Uber wasn't in the bike lane my daughter would have been safe. If only he didn't move back when he saw her..... if only he wasn't there in the first place.

I hope my daughter and so many others who have been killed and injured because of the dangerous act of parking in a bike lane is ever present when you consider this new life-saving bill.

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At the vigil held for Madison shortly after she was killed, a letter was read by Amanda expressing shock at the lack of protection for bicyclists in what she'd been led to believe was the greatest city in the world. She said such conditions were not tolerated in Australia. Since then, Families For Safe Streets along has joined with others to fight tirelessly to change this. A civilian reporting program which both fines abusers, and incentivizes reporting will, we hope, be a solid step in ensuring that bicyclists are truly protected in New York, and that no other family will have to suffer such a loss again.

Families for Safe Streets strongly supports this life-saving bill -- it can not pass soon enough, and I want to thank Council Member Levin for his leadership in advancing it.





New York City Council Hearing
Transportation Committee Hearing
Illegal Parking and Bike Lanes Int 2159-2020
January 12, 2021
Testimony of Sean Adair

My name is Sean Adair and I am a member of Families for Safe Streets. I am here to strongly support Int 2159-2020.

I know firsthand the dangers of illegally parked cars. About three years ago, I was riding my bicycle on the First Avenue bicycle lane near 21st Street when a truck was illegally double parked in the left turning lane, forcing other vehicles to swerve around the parked vehicle. This blocked all visibility between us and I was unable to completely stop in time when a car stopped suddenly in front of me for a crossing pedestrian. Luckily this was a minor impact and just a scare with no injury or damage. I wasn't so lucky a year later when a car for hire went through a red light and hit me from behind giving me lasting injuries.

I live on the east/west bicycle corridor of 12th/13th Streets in Manhattan and use these bike lanes on nearly a daily basis. It is this welcome, but very different type of lane that is especially prone to vehicle interference. It is a particularly dangerous violation because the remainder of the street is very narrow. Yet there is ALWAYS a vehicle in the bicycle lane regularly requiring me and other cyclists to ride around the parked car or truck, putting us in danger. I've also had doors open in my path from delivery and car service vehicles which use this "no stopping" area as a "free for all pull over zone". There are regularly service trucks parked illegally in the bike lane near Verizon's depot (13th Street at 2nd Ave) and NYU vehicles parked near the university between 3rd and 4th Avenues. The result is that it is MORE dangerous than sharing the road. I've also found that parking enforcement officers are not willing to address many of these infringements. If someone is waiting in the car, they will ask them to move, but not fine them for standing in the space (let alone stopping).

I am a member of the citizens reporting for idling commercial vehicles and it's been a huge success, both financially for the city as well as making changes in behaviour. I am so pleased to see that citizen reporting will be a component of this bill and on behalf of Families for Safe Streets, urge rapid passage of this important legislation.

COMMUNITY BOARD 1 – MANHATTAN
RESOLUTION

DATE: DECEMBER 22, 2020

COMMITTEE OF ORIGIN: TRANSPORTATION & STREET ACTIVITY PERMITS

COMMITTEE VOTE:	8 In Favor	0 Opposed	0 Abstained	0 Recused
PUBLIC VOTE:	1 In Favor	0 Opposed	0 Abstained	0 Recused
BOARD VOTE:	30 In Favor	0 Opposed	7 Abstained	0 Recused

RE: Civilian Complaints Hazardous Obstruction Violations

WHEREAS: Int-2159-2020, introduced to the New York City (NYC) Council on November 19, 2020, would amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to hazardous obstruction by vehicles and civilian complaints to the Department of Transportation (DOT) for hazardous obstruction violations; and

WHEREAS: Int-2159 would allow citizens to report illegal parking in bike lanes, bus lanes, and crosswalks, and on sidewalks, including parking by city vehicles and private vehicles with a placard, paraphernalia, or illegal placard; and

WHEREAS: Cases would be adjudicated before the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings. If found guilty, the perpetrator would be fined \$175 – up from the current \$115 fine; and

WHEREAS: As introduced a reporting citizen would receive 25% of any fines collected; and

WHEREAS: Int-2159-2020 would supplement legislation on placard abuse and dangerous parking that the NYC Council passed in 2018 and in 2019 by addressing the lack of enforcement of those laws by the NYC Police Department (NYPD); and

WHEREAS: While the extent of placard misuse by city employees is uncertain, it is an issue that has been widely documented on social media and in complaints to 311

WHEREAS: Violations for parking abuses by city vehicles and private vehicles with city-issued placards are rarely enforced or correctly responded to on 311; and

WHEREAS: Citizen reporting of commercial truck idling has been successful and has in fines missed by the city's enforcement agencies; and

WHEREAS: The reportable offenses, parking in bus lanes, bike lanes, sidewalk, crosswalk, jeopardize public safety by forcing buses, cyclists and pedestrians out of their safe designated spaces or delaying fire control with blocked hydrant; and

WHEREAS: Illegal parking in No Standing Zones create hazardous obstructions that endanger the public when inadequate road clearance results directly (e.g., limits turn radius

clearance) or indirectly (e.g., forcing double parking) thus interfering with the safe and efficient movement of traffic; and

WHEREAS: Illegal and placard parking in Loading and Unloading Zones frequently create hazardous obstructions that endanger the public by forcing delivery vehicles to double park while being loaded or unload; and

WHEREAS: Blocking all or part of a sidewalk ramp is hazardous as it does not allow pedestrians with wheeled devices (wheelchairs, strollers, delivery carts, etc.) to get out of the road and onto the sidewalk away from traffic; and

WHEREAS: Manhattan Community District 1 has a disproportionate number of city owned vehicles and placard users and imitators that create hazardous obstructions; now

THEREFORE

BE IT

RESOLVED

THAT: Manhattan Community Board 1 (CB 1) calls upon the Honorable Margaret Chin to support passage of Int- 2020-2159; and

BE IT

FURTHER

RESOLVED

THAT: CB 1 Requests that the City Council amend Int-2020-2159 by adding no standing zones, loading zones and blocking sidewalk ramps (curb cuts) as reportable locations where parking creates a hazardous obstruction that endangers safety; and

BE IT

FURTHER

RESOLVED

THAT: CB 1 urges the Department of Transportation to amend the placard parking regulations (§ 19-162.3 City-issued parking permits) so that it is *not* permissible to park in truck loading and unloading zones or to block any portion of a sidewalk ramp (curb cut) with a placard.



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

**City Council Committee on Transportation
Hearing on Intro 2159
January 12, 2021**

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

Unlawful vehicle parking in bike and bus lanes is a problem that persists daily in New York City. These illegal obstructions from private and commercial vehicles endanger cyclists and impede public transit efficiency. Cyclists have to maneuver around these vehicles, risking their safety by limiting their visibility and forcing them onto roads with oncoming traffic. This puts people at greater risk of crashes that can be fatal or otherwise result in serious injuries. These parked vehicles also impede buses by blocking bus lanes. Bus lanes are intended to improve public transportation by giving buses a dedicated right of way, but when buses have to move out of their clear lane into traffic to avoid an illegally parked vehicle the purpose of the bus lane is moot.

NYLCV supports the passage of Intro. 2159 as it will enhance enforcement of bike and bus lane protection by applying stricter consequences to vehicles illegally obstructing these lanes near schools. This bill will also establish a community reporting system where civilians can report, and be rewarded for reporting, the dangerous traffic obstructions that they encounter. This will empower people to protect themselves by clearing their bike lanes and protect their neighborhoods by giving fellow commuters open bus lanes.

NYLCV supports this bill and believes it is a good start to adequately protect transit infrastructure that disincentivizes low occupancy vehicles. We would like to see this program expanded so that New Yorkers all over the city can help to protect bike and bus lanes so they can be used as intended.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.



BRUCE FUHRMANN
PRESIDENT

VINCENT THEURER
VICE-PRESIDENT

ROCCO LACERTOSA
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

RAYMOND A. HART
TREASURER

ALLISON HEANEY
SECRETARY

January 12, 2021

**Testimony of Rocco J. Lacertosa
Chief Executive Officer
New York State Energy Coalition**

Before the

**New York City Council
Committee on Transportation**

Regarding

Int. 2159 – Hazardous Obstruction Legislation

Good morning Chairman Rodriguez and the rest of the committee members and thank you for the opportunity to testify.

My name is Rocco J. Lacertosa and I serve as Chief Executive Officer of the New York State Energy Coalition (NYSEC). NYSEC serves as the voice of renewable biodiesel and heating oil industry in the five boroughs of New York City and Nassau and Suffolk Counties

Today's hearing will involve a broader discussion about the issues of illegal parking and bike lanes throughout the city but I would like to focus my testimony on intro 2159, which we believe will negatively impact the way our industry operates. The heating oil industry is well into the 2020-2021 heating season and we are already seeing cold temperatures and winter conditions in New York City. As a result, our members are working harder than ever to deliver consistent service amongst a number of obstacles. Furthermore, given the pandemic and the increasing number of people who are working from home and residing within the home for long periods of time, the demand for heating oil is higher than ever.

It should be of no surprise to the members of this committee that delivering any type of essential service in New York City has become increasingly difficult given the expansion of transit infrastructure improvements such as dedicated bus lanes and the proliferation of bike lanes in neighborhoods throughout the five boroughs. The heating oil industry, however, faces a unique set of challenges as we are unable to park just anywhere when conducting our deliveries. In almost all cases, our fuel trucks must park as close as possible to the customer's location, whether it be commercial or residential, in order to access the point of entry to the fuel tanks. Thankfully, our delivery personnel take on average 15-20 minutes to complete a fuel delivery depending on the size of the tank with a maximum of 30 minutes in some specific instances.

As the City implements more bus and bike lanes to improve the transit system in New York City, our members have had to adapt their delivery options to fit the current streetscape. However, some of our members have reported customer locations where they have no physical way of delivering fuel without temporarily occupying a bus or bike lane. It is important to note that our members go out of their way to ensure that their vehicles are complying with all New York City

Representing New York's



Heating Fuels Industry

BRUCE FUHRMANN
PRESIDENT

VINCENT THEURER
VICE-PRESIDENT

ROCCO LACERTOSA
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

RAYMOND A. HART
TREASURER

ALLISON HEANEY
SECRETARY

parking and traffic regulations but the legislation being proposed today could make things significantly more difficult for our members.

As written, Intro 2159 would create a new civil violation punishable by up to \$175 for blocking a bus lane or bike lane within a radial distance of 1,320 feet from an entrance or exit of a school. Many of our members serve not only DOE and private school facilities but also a number of residential and commercial customers whose locations would fall within that distance. As such, the legislation poses a number of concerns for our members and we look forward to working with the bill sponsor and the Council to address these concerns.

Thank you.



Testimony of Kendra Hems

On Behalf of

Trucking Association of New York

Before the

**New York City Council
Committees on Transportation
January 21, 2021**

Regarding

Int 2159-2020: Hazardous Obstruction of Bus and Bike Lanes

I would like to thank Chairman Rodriguez as well as the members of the committees for the opportunity to testify before you today. For over 85 years, the Trucking Association of New York (TANY), a non-profit trade group, has represented the trucking industry in New York, advocating for the industry at the local, state and federal levels. We provide educational programs to our membership, which enhance their safety and maintenance efforts and offer numerous councils and committees to meet the diverse needs of our membership. TANY comprises over 600 member companies from New York, Canada, every border state, and other states across the country and is the exclusive New York affiliate of the American Trucking Associations (ATA).

Since the onset of the pandemic last March, the trucking industry has been grappling with unprecedented levels of delivery and consumer demand. The hardworking men and women of our industry have gone above and beyond to ensure that frontline workers receive personal protective equipment (PPE), stores receive essential goods for their customers, and everyday New Yorkers have the supplies they need to weather out the COVID-19 pandemic. As we have testified to this Committee in the past, delivering goods in New York City has become increasingly more difficult over the past several years with the introduction of the Clear Curbs Clear Lanes initiative as well as the expansion of dedicated bus and bike lanes.

While we understand the intent of the legislation and ensuring that crosswalks, bus and bike lanes, as well as hydrants are kept clear of obstruction, TANY has several concerns with Int. 2159 as written. The civilian reporting aspect of the legislation causes the most concern for our industry as we have been battling with the impacts of the City's idling law which has a similar civilian reporting enforcement element to it. We have seen a number of individuals take advantage of the program while creating a source of revenue for themselves. Oftentimes, civilians are unaware why some of our vehicles must idle when making deliveries for example, or falsely report vehicles idling when in fact they just turned their engines off moments after the complaint was submitted.

TRUCKING ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK

With regards to Int. 2159, it is not entirely clear how the adjudication process works for vehicle owners who receive a violation nor is it clear that offenders are afforded the opportunity to view the video themselves. This raises concerns with the due process element of the complainant system. Unfortunately, the fact of the matter is real enforcement by the various city agencies involved cannot be replaced by untrained and unqualified well-intentioned citizens.

Additionally, the trucking industry has long struggled with the lack of enforcement in commercial loading zones and other designated commercial parking resulting in the need for our members to find whatever space they can to make a timely delivery.

We feel that it is incumbent upon the City of New York to approach this issue holistically, and as part of a larger discussion regarding the lack of a “master plan” for trucking and freight management in New York City. The Council and the administration need to look at the gaps in the current strategy and re-envision freight management, so that we can find real solutions that get to the heart of the issue, rather than continuing to penalize the trucking industry without any real opportunity to comply.

We look forward to working with the Council to address our concerns with the current legislation.

Thank you.

TRUCKING ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK

January 12, 2021

Hearing on Illegal Parking and Blocking of Sidewalks, Crosswalks, Bike Lanes and Bus Lanes

*Testimony before the New York City Council Committee on Transportation
by Marco Conner DiAquoi, Deputy Director, Transportation Alternatives*

Support: Intro 2159-2020 & 1141-2018

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Thank you Chair Rodriguez for convening this hearing and for your life-saving leadership to advance Vision Zero, and thank you Speaker Johnson and Council Member Levin for introducing this legislation and for your leadership.

For nearly 50 years Transportation Alternatives (TA) has advocated on behalf of New Yorkers for safe and equitable streets. With more than 125,000 people in our network and hundreds of activists throughout the five boroughs, we fight to promote biking, walking, and public transportation as sustainable alternatives to the car for all New Yorkers.

In 2018 Madison Jane Lyden was killed while biking in the Central Park West bike lane. She was forced into the vehicle travel lane by a car driver parked in the bike lane, obstructing her right of way, and was struck by the driver of a large truck. This is precisely the type of reckless parking behavior that Intro 2159 would address. And for every person like Madison hundreds more are injured from the exact same dangerous parking behavior.

Vehicles illegally blocking crosswalks, bike lanes, bus lanes and sidewalks is a problem rampant throughout our city that Mayor de Blasio's administration has not remotely addressed with the seriousness it requires. The proof of this inaction is right before us on every street with illegal parking where pedestrians and cyclists are forced to walk into dangerous traffic, where drivers' sight lines are obstructed limiting their ability to see pedestrians, and where transit riders are unacceptably delayed, often enroute to essential jobs, because of bus lanes blocked by parked cars, contributing to the slowest bus service in the nation. And the proof is in the absence of Madison Jane Lyden. The fact that Madison is no longer here is the proof of the utter inadequacy of the City's efforts to date. New Yorkers, and every person visiting our city, Like Madison, deserve action to solve this problem.

City Hall, NYPD and NYC DOT are doing some things in some areas, including expanding the network of protected bike lanes, albeit slowly, and implementing miles of new Open Streets, albeit reluctantly. But these half-measures are inadequate and are worsened by what the City is not doing. Mayor de Blasio has defunded the Dangerous Vehicle Abatement Program that would have directly enforced against reckless

drivers in a fair manner; the City has delayed funding and implementation of Speaker Johnson's Streets Master Plan; is slow-walking the Vision Zero Design Checklist and its own Green Wave Plan; and more than 200 days have passed without any response from the Mayor following comprehensive safety and recovery recommendations from his own Surface Transportation Advisory Panel. In too many ways Mayor de Blasio and his administration are doing less instead of more to save lives. This is unacceptable.

Illegal and dangerous parking also affects people using wheelchairs in many ways. When already limited ADA compliant sidewalk curbs are blocked by vehicles parked in a crosswalk it forces wheelchair users -- who are pedestrians under state law, to travel in the vehicle travel lane immediately alongside multi-ton lethal vehicles to the next intersection in the hopes of being able to ride onto the sidewalk there. And vehicles parked at crosswalks creates additional risks for wheelchair users and other pedestrians by limiting the sight lines and reaction times for pedestrians and drivers approaching an intersection, increasing the risk of injury and death.

These are just some of the many ways illegally parked cars cause real harm and create unacceptably dangerous conditions throughout our city. In addition this reckless behavior harms how we feel about using our public space. Already more than 75% of our street space is reserved for moving, or storing for free, private cars and trucks, with pedestrians and cyclists pushed to the margins of the road and given limited protection. When cars then occupy additional space by blocking crosswalks, sidewalks, bus lanes and bike lanes -- space reserved for vulnerable street users and transit riders, it sends the signal that these streets are not for you if you are not in a car and that you are not welcome here. When our city fails to enforce against this behavior it says that our city, our Mayor and government, do not care about us feeling safe and free to move around in our own city. These are spaces that should be sacred, not free-for-all parking spaces that harms NYers. There is often discussion about the mobility that access to a car provides. We need to start improving the mobility for all New Yorkers, especially when we walk, bike and ride the bus, and this legislation would do just that.

The proposed legislation can create a fair and just enforcement mechanism. Operating a large multi-ton vehicle comes with unrecognized tremendous responsibility, including not speeding, and also not creating hazardous conditions like parking illegally. This proposed law would create a civil fine, not a criminal fine, for dangerously operating a large vehicle, and it would not result in more officers on the street.

To help ensure this law's fairness we urge the Council to consider a fine structure that starts with fines lower than \$175, a warning for your first offense followed by escalating fines for subsequent violations, ensuring that these violations never lead to warrants being issued, and a possible separate enforcement structure for commercial vehicles.

There is precedence for the citizen enforcement proposed by this legislation under the City's current vehicle idling laws administered by the Department of Environmental Protection for which a structure is already in place that can be easily emulated to quickly implement Intro 2159.



Intro 1141 would implement long overdue reform of the city's Commercial Abatement and Stipulated Parking Fine Programs. The legislation has more than a majority of Council Members as sponsors and should be enacted as soon as possible.

Finally, we urge the Council to address the NYPD's blatant and dangerous routine blocking of sidewalks throughout our city with parked police vehicles, a risk not only ignored but accommodated by Mayor de Blasio's administration.

Transportation Alternatives supports Intro 2159 and 1141 and urges their passage and enactment as soon as possible.

Thank you.

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**Testimony in Support of Int 2159
To the City Council Committee on Transportation
Presented by Brooklyn Greenway Initiative Director of Development &
Administration Remy Schwartz
January 12, 2021**

Brooklyn Greenway Initiative (BGI) is a private nonprofit that for two decades has been focused on the development, establishment, and long-term stewardship of the Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway, a vital and nearly complete component of the greenways network throughout NYC's five boroughs. As the "backbone" of the city's bike infrastructure network, greenways serve as safe and accessible green corridors for active recreation and non-motorized transportation. They are linear connectors of people and communities, providing public access to green space and the waterfront, commercial corridors, and job centers. The Greenway adds new mobility options for transit-starved residential and business communities, and connects workers to new and growing job centers along the waterfront and to the Manhattan and Queens Greenway networks.

BGI enthusiastically supports the proposed bill that aims to remove vehicle obstructions from bicycle lanes, bus lanes when restrictions are in effect, sidewalks, and crosswalks. New York City's greenways and bike lanes have been busier than ever before during the Pandemic, and it is essential they remain clear and well-maintained to support mobility and healthful recreation across the citywide bike network. BGI also supports the creation of a civilian complaint process that will share proceeds with complainants, which will help immediately ramp up enforcement in bike lanes.

Many of the Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway's busiest sections are on-road segments of bike lanes that are commonly obstructed by parked cars, delivery trucks, municipal and NYPD vehicles. When a bike lane is blocked, an approaching cyclist is required to either veer into auto traffic, putting themselves in danger of being struck by a driver who is not expecting to share the auto lane with a bike or scooter, or to illegally navigate on to the sidewalk where they put themselves and pedestrians at risk.

BGI measured a 222% increase in bicycle users on the Greenway in 2020 as compared with 2019, with hundreds of thousands of new cyclists joining the flow of traffic in the city's bike lanes. The rapidly growing group of New Yorkers that use a bicycle, scooter, or other form of human-powered transportation should feel safe while using the City's comprehensive network of bike lanes as they are intended.

BGI applauds the proposed bill's focus on accountability for vehicles parked illegally in bike lanes. The proactive approach of enabling citizens to report illegal obstructions in the bike lane will help close the current gap of enforcement that NYPD has been unable to close.

New York City should meet its commitment to Vision Zero by ensuring bike lanes, sidewalks, bus lanes, and crosswalks are clear, unobstructed, and safe for all who use them. Safe bike lanes will result in fewer crashes and traffic fatalities and will help to keep all New Yorkers safe as they move across the city.

BGI looks forward to continuing to work with the City to make the Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway and the city's larger bicycle infrastructure safe and connected. A leading factor to growth in Greenway use is the perceived and very real safety benefits that such a protected route offers. Prioritizing enforcement of illegal obstructions on the Greenway will move us more swiftly toward Vision Zero standards as greater numbers of people, using all mobility options, live and work along the waterfront.

Thank you Council Member Levin for bringing this conversation to the fore with Speaker Johnson and Council Members Constantinides, Rivera, Rosenthal, and Van Bramer. Thank you to Chair Rodriguez and the Transportation Committee for the opportunity to testify before you today.

With regard to Int 2159-2020, I would like to express my support for this legislation. As a regular bike commuter, the most dangerous encounter I experience is vehicles parked in bike lanes. Blocked bike lanes may seem innocuous – can't we just go around? – but the danger lies in the physics. When cyclists are forced to go around cars blocking their path, they must enter vehicular travel lanes where much larger vehicles are moving at speeds much faster than them. Cyclists are forced to make judgments about how fast a vehicle is moving, or how much time they may have to pass an obstruction. This is high stakes, and cyclists often get it wrong. In addition to the life threatening nature, this move is also simply intimidating. Vehicle drivers often honk, speed around, and behave aggressively around cyclists, making the commute unnecessarily stressful. This stress alone is enough to keep thousands of cyclists off their bikes every day. I often choose not to cycle because on any given day, the stress might not be worth it for me. We are in a climate crisis, and a city like New York should be prioritizing non-polluting commuting methods. It is my true hope that someday, cycling will be a low-stress commute option, not the high-stakes game that it currently is. Thank you.

Sincerely,

April Schneider

Brooklyn resident

Simon Lund
70 Forsyth St, NY NY 10036

T/o: The Committee on Transportation
Oversight - Illegal Parking and Bike Lanes

I'm amending this document because I didn't realize till the hearing that what's going on in the bike lanes is not a lack of enforcement but a lack of any real meaning of the bike lane. Making a bike lane is more than painting lines on the ground, it's also creating penalties for people who endanger the cyclists and a effort from the city to maintain a surface suitable to bike on such as proper paving, not putting all the manhole covers in the bike lane and plowing the bike lane when it snows. Without real penalties and enforcement, the bike lanes are meaningless and you end up with the situation you have now which the bike lane has become a extra parking lane. Because of this, I support the Int 2159-2020 with the change that it applies to all bike lanes, not just ones in school zones.

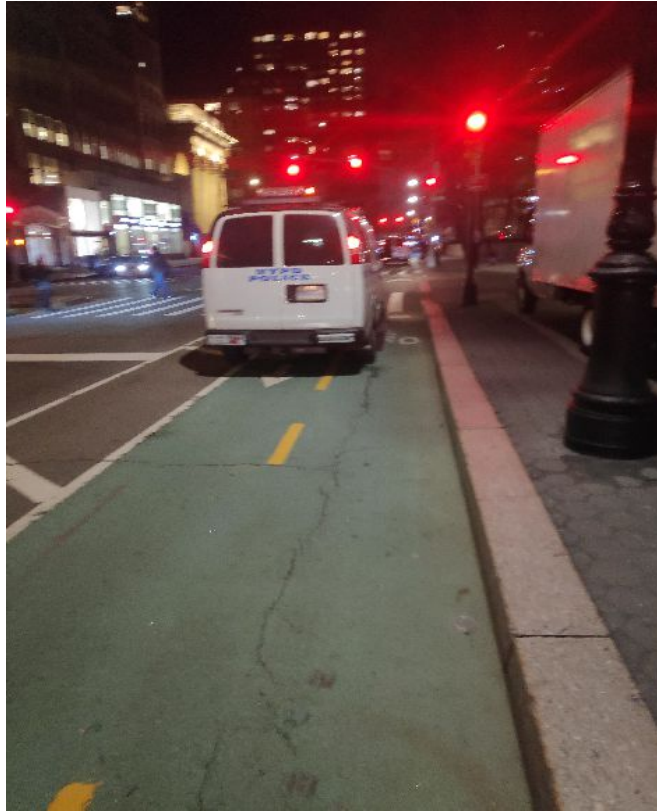
I've been riding a bike in New York for 25 years and I currently commute daily from Chinatown to Midtown (44th&9th). In the last year of commuting this route, I would say I see around 6 cars and trucks parked in the bike lane each way in the four mile route and in the year, I have never seen a vehicle getting a ticket. I would suggest that the NYPD put some officers on bicycles and patrol the bike lanes, the ticketing would improve the situation and pay for the officers time and change drivers attitudes to the bike lane. When I heard about this hearing a week ago, I started taking photos on my cell on my commute to have something concrete to show, here is a typical day:



A moving truck in SOHO, I feel for them but its very common these days and it's a pincer between a outdoor dining and them so I'm fighting with cars for the road... and they are blocking a hydrant. The two blocks on Prince between W. Broadway and Sullivan has delivery trucks standing every day.



It's 10 am across from Madison Square Garden, sort of early for a slice, now I have to cut into the turn lane... same difference, the drivers were not going to yield to me anyway.



Union Square around 7pm, right after the siege of the congress, the NYPD has vans ready for some sort of protest and they are using the bike lane as their staging area with three vans in a row blocking both ways.

Thanks for coinciding this law to improve the safety of cyclists in the city,

Simon Lund

Charge \$500 per/yr for NYC placards. That's \$83m right there for the 166,000 placards dolled-out.

Eliminate ALL placard parking at Muni Meters. That alone would generate \$105m per year.

Neighborhood Alternate Side Resident Parking at \$250 per/yr. That's \$2.5m+ per/yr just in Manhattan.

All would greatly relieve congestion and raise much-needed revenue.

In addition, take all parking ticketing away from the NYPD and create an autonomous department. This will eliminate, "Police Courtesy" corruption.

Bill Feinberg

Committee Chair Rodriguez and other Committee Councilmembers,

I am offering my testimony in support of Int 2159-2020, sponsored by my local Councilmember Stephen Levin of District 33.

The Covid-19 crisis has redefined mobility in New York. While many New Yorkers have turned to registering new cars and SUVs in order to appropriately social distance away from mass transit and protect themselves from contagion risk on often crowded buses, thousands of others like myself have taken up more walking and cycling as our means of mobility to and from essential activities.

This rise in cycling has not been fully supported by the City, even though it is the more sustainable and healthy alternative to traveling by car or SUV. I live in downtown Brooklyn, which has been blessed with many mobility options such as the Fulton St, Jay St, and Livingstone St bus lanes, as well as dedicated bike lanes (e.g. Jay St, Schermerhorn St, DeKalb Ave) and generally well-developed pedestrian infrastructure. I also frequently use the Brooklyn Greenway via Flushing and Kent Avenues to bike into Queens for essential activities.

Without fail however, every single day of the week, many of these sidewalks, busways and bike lanes in my community are encroached upon by illegally parked personal vehicles and delivery trucks creating dangerous conditions for cyclists, especially new ones like myself, and rendering ineffective the taxpayer investments made by the City into creating these pedestrian crossings, bus lanes, and bike lanes. Reporting such encroachment to 311 rarely produces appropriate enforcement because either the NYPD fails to respond altogether citing its prioritization of bigger emergencies, or by the time the NYPD responds, it is unable (or unwilling) to find evidence of the reported encroachment. As a result, the offenders face no penalties to change their inconsiderate and unsafe behaviour much to the frustration of the community.

Reporting these violations to 311 alone has NOT been working. Councilmember Levin has been well aware of the challenges faced by his District constituents, and I welcome the solution he has proposed with Int 2159-2020.

Signing Int 2159-2020 into Local Law would create an avenue for appropriate enforcement for keeping pedestrian-, cyclist-, and transit infrastructure clear of encroachment while keeping the NYPD free to focus on other priority tasks. Cyclists who are forced off bike lanes into fast moving general traffic because of illegally parked vehicles in bike lanes, pedestrians that must enter into traffic lanes to avoid vehicles parked on crosswalks and sidewalks, as well as bus riders whose trips are delayed by delivery trucks parked in busways, would feel reassured that our needs for safe and equitable mobility in New York City were being addressed by the Council. We can support and contribute to safer streets for all by ourselves reporting illegal obstructions of bike lanes, busways, and crosswalks on a real-time basis, and knowing that these dangerous safety violations will go before the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings for real action and not merely disregarded by 311, NYC DOT, and the NYPD as a low-importance quality of life issues.

While I hope the Committee will eventually consider expanding the geographic purview of the Local Law, Councilmember Levin's proposal to initially focus on a radial distance of 1,320 feet from school buildings is a good start. Pedestrian, cyclist, and bus rider safety is especially important when it comes to ensuring the well-being of the City's school-going children, their families, and their teachers and staff.

Please signal your commitment to pedestrian, cyclist and bus rider safety by signing Int 2159-2020 into Local Law.

Thank you.

New York City Council Committee on Transportation Hearing
January 12, 2021
Testimony of Eric McClure, Executive Director, StreetsPAC

StreetsPAC strongly supports Intro 2159, which would create a new violation and civil penalty for hazardous obstruction by a vehicle of a bike lane, bus lane (when bus-only restrictions are in effect), sidewalk, crosswalk, or fire hydrant, when the violation occurs within one quarter mile of a school building, entrance, or exit, imposing a fine of \$175 for each such violation, judicable by the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings (OATH).

Intro 2159 would also require the Department of Transportation to create a civilian-reporting mechanism by which members of the public could report alleged violations and submit supporting evidence. If such violations were substantiated and DOT were to bring a case, the civilian complainant would be entitled to 25% of the penalty collected as a reward.

The reporting mechanism is modeled on the Department of Environmental Protection's Citizens Air Complaint Program, which works the same way for idling violations, and a bit like the Taxi and Limousine Commission's complaint system, which does not pay a reward. Both existing programs are considered successful, and allow the city to increase enforcement of harmful behavior without burdening law-enforcement personnel.

Illegal parking is rampant in New York City, and in too many cases, creates hazardous situations for people using the streets. One of the most tragic examples from recent memory was the death of tourist Madison Jane Lyden, who was killed in 2018 in a crash after being forced into traffic by a taxi driver illegally stopped in the bike lane on Central Park West.

While such incidents of illegal parking happen thousands, if not tens of thousands of times every day, and are reportable to 311, existing enforcement efforts are severely lacking. It often takes hours for police to respond, frequently well after the violator has driven off. Worse, in too many cases, police fail to take action when they do respond. Not only will Intro 2159 help hold those creating dangerous street conditions accountable, but it will, in many cases, free up police for other tasks.

Ideally, we'd like to see the bill advance without the quarter-mile restriction, since illegal parking can create danger anywhere – I'm not sure, for example, if there is a school within that radius from where Madison was killed – but we support this legislation regardless. The concerns expressed by the administration can be addressed. We urge the Council to reconcile those concerns quickly, vote Intro 2159 out of committee, and pass it into law at the earliest opportunity.

Of course, this legislation alone won't eradicate the rampant problem of illegal parking in bike lanes. We strongly support the use of bike-lane cameras, and would gladly work with the administration to help advance legislation permitting their use in Albany.

However, the best way to address the problem is to design and build bike lanes that can't be parked or driven in. Too many of the city's "protected" bike lanes are only protected by flexible

plastic posts that drivers too often flout. A bike lane should only be counted as protected if it can't be driven in, which means hard, physical protection in the form of parking protection, jersey barriers, or curbs that can't be mounted.

We also strongly support expansion of the city's pilot Neighborhood Loading Zone program. We urge that the program be expanded widely and made permanent.

Finally, it's imperative that the Department of Transportation release its overdue Smart Truck Management Plan without any further delay. As the number of truck deliveries continues to soar, the potential exists to overwhelm neighborhoods with truck traffic. In Brooklyn's Red Hook, for example, there are at least four e-commerce distribution centers planned, all as-of-right, in a neighborhood whose old cobblestone streets are ill-equipped to handle the onslaught.

Eric McClure
Executive Director
StreetsPAC
17 Battery Place, Suite 204
New York, NY 10004
(646) 522-2589
www.streetspac.org



Illegal Parking in Bike Lanes: my testimony

Having cycled NYC for over 30 years I welcomed the advent of bike lanes, their proliferation around the city and their continued improvements, however bike lanes are not useful if they are made defunct by the common practice of drivers using them to park in. This happens mostly in the unprotected lanes, though I have witnessed (and recorded) many instances of police cars parked there, next to coffee shops, delis etc. without lights or sirens or any indication of them being there for the purposes of their job. Many people park in bike lanes, from those simply dropping off a passenger, loading or unloading their cars, either private cars or service vehicles, to those using it as a place to park while passing the time eating lunch, texting, to ride service vehicle drivers hanging out waiting for their next job, to delivery vehicles, mail trucks and more. I most frequently see UPS, FedEx and USPS trucks everywhere, while mostly private cars next to high-rise buildings and ride service vehicles scattered everywhere. On Ave C just next to where I live the local car service company uses the bike lanes from 10th Street to 13th street as parking for their drivers waiting for work: along with the private cars often parked there too, these lanes are almost never clear when I cycle there.

One easy solution, where the street is wide enough to accommodate it, is to switch these lanes from unprotected to protected. To have the barrier of legally parked cars blocking the bike lanes from being parked in. In the case of those blocks on Ave C there is plenty of room for such and no real reason not to.

This brings me to another point: unprotected lanes next to high-rise buildings or groups of buildings with large populations are the most likely to be blocked: there are just so many people that there is always someone loading or unloading, and getting packages delivered. One example is E. 106th street that I cycle a lot. I've rarely cycled that street with an open lane. It too is a good candidate for protected lanes as it is very wide and has a huge painted out zone in the middle of the road. If it had a regular divider line, there would be plenty of room to move the bike lanes to the sidewalk and the parking outside.

I have been hit by cars numerous times and am lucky to have survived some of them with only broken bones. I wear a helmet, reflective clothing and have reflectors and many lights on my bike for maximum visibility. I do all that I can to be seen and be safe. I am a veteran cyclist but there are many novices out there, especially since the advent of the Citibike program and consciousness about environment and healthy practices and also increased riding in the past decades and now during CoVid19 restrictions and the dangers of public transport, cycling is, and should be, a valid safe alternative... safe from contagion perhaps, but safe from vehicle dangers is imperative for the wellbeing of the cyclists and to encourage more to use bikes. While creating protected lanes is optimum, they are not possible in narrow streets or some other circumstances. The unprotected lanes are far less safe but still a big improvement on none. These lanes must be kept clear of parked vehicles so cyclists aren't forced out into traffic. In fact no lane may be safer than a lane that is partly blocked as the cyclist will travel the lane until forced out by the obstruction so has to enter moving traffic to do so, as opposed to moving with it from the start. This makes the obstruction doubly dangerous. In the case of unprotected lanes, enforcement of the laws and ticketing of the offenders is the minimum that should be done and frequently such that there is an understood threat by all that violations will be punished. I would further suggest a fleet of tow trucks that remove any obstructing vehicles on discovery would increase the stakes for violators and show the public that this dangerous situation that clearly has been ignored by the city is been finally taken seriously. And these enforcements need to continue on an ongoing basis, not a publicity stunt where they pop up for a few weeks and then return to the status quo that is killing and maiming members of the public.

Thank you for your attention, yours Gearóid Dolan, 645 East 11th St, NY, NY 10009

1/4/21

Hello,

My name is Gwinevere von Ludwig and I have been riding my bike on the streets of NYC since 1998.

While the increase in bike traffic is fantastic – as is the growth in the number of bike lanes – it is very true that many drivers do not respect bike lanes and park in them regularly. Even the NYPD parks in the lanes regularly, most notably on St. Nicholas Avenue near W. 122nd Street (near their precinct).

Other areas of concern:

- St. Nicholas Ave. north of W. 125th Street
- Amsterdam Ave. north of W. 145th Street
- Basically, anywhere that is NOT a protected bike lane at this point will have cars parked in it

I would have more details, but at this point I go out of my way to ride on streets WITHOUT bike lanes so as to avoid the frustration of having to go around cars parked in them.

In addition, I would like to add that I do not believe delivery e-bikes should be allowed in bike lanes. These vehicles go as fast as Revels (which are rightfully not allowed in them), and are often operated in an unsafe manner with no lights, going the wrong way, etc.

Thanks,

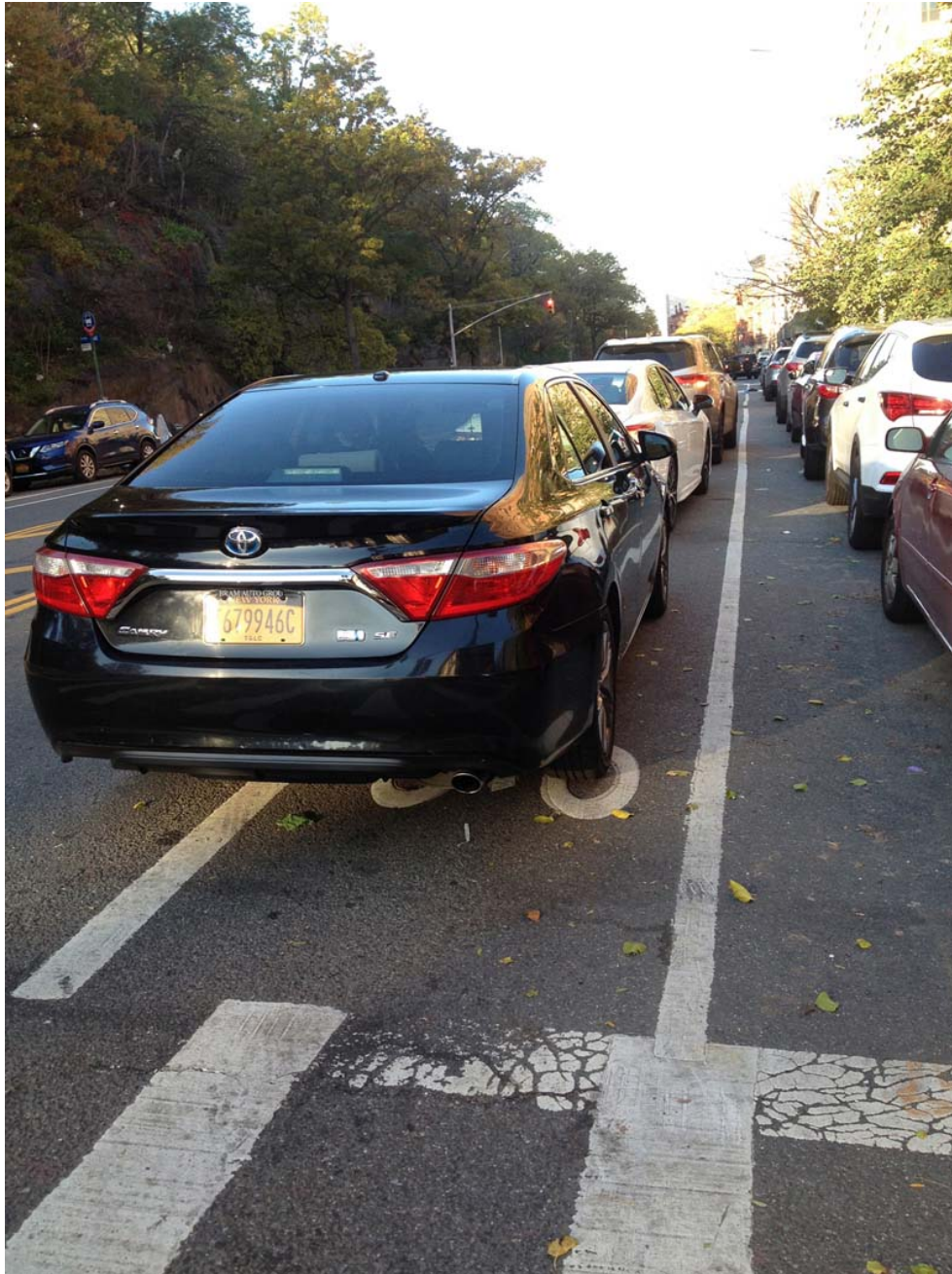
Gwinevere von Ludwig

Jana Leo de Blas, 517 West 144th Street Apart 12a, New York , New York 10031

TESTIMONY: CARS BLOCKING BIKE LINES AND NO OVERSIGHT



Cars blocking the bike lane means I have to go off my line and enter into the road exposing myself to be hit by a car.



On November 4rd 2020, I have a free afternoon. I went to St. Nicholas Avenue.

I took pictures of vehicles blocking the bike lane I often use.

I count 11 vehicles in one block covering the bike lanes.

I confronted every vehicle in these pictures. Some told me they have the right to park there. Other insulted me. Some left.

The pictures are taken around 400 St. Nicholas Avenue at 129th street.





Looking South the bike line is blocked also by cars.

Pretty much every bike line in Manhattan in the morning and afternoon is covered with cars!

I see two main dangers for cyclist:

1- Bike lines are blocked by cars and delivery trucks and they are allowed to do that because no police goes around in bikes into the bikes lines putting fine to vehicles blocking.

2- Not enough bike lines, so bikers has to go on traffic.



I walked North, and in less than a block a Fed Ex truck, was stopped there.

I took 2 pictures and wait for the driver to came.

I confront the driver and ask him why he is parked in the bike line. He told me he has no other place to park and has to deliver.





Service Request Submitted

Hello Jana L,

Thank you for contacting NYC311. Your Service Request has been sent to New York City Police Department, NYPD.

Your request details are:

Service
Request Number : 311-04502338
Type : Illegal Parking - Blocked Bike Lane
Location : 400 ST NICHOLAS AVENUE, MANHATTAN (NEW YORK), NY, 10027 - MANHATTAN
Date : 11/4/2020 7:30:53 PM
Submitted :

To get further updates delivered you'll need to [subscribe](#). You can also check status anytime [here](#). Did you know that 311 now offers accounts? An account will save you time when filing service requests and allow you to track updates in one convenient location. [Click here to sign up](#).

Thank you,
NYC311

SR Closed # 311-04502338

Yahoo/Inbox



SRNotice <srnotice@customercare.nyc.gov>
To: Simon Lund

Wed, Nov 4, 2020 at 8:00 PM



Service Request Closed

Hello Jana L,

This Service Request has been closed by the New York City Police Department, NYPD.

Service
Request Number : 311-04502338
Type : Illegal Parking - Blocked Bike Lane
Location : 400 ST NICHOLAS AVENUE, MANHATTAN (NEW YORK), NY, 10027 - MANHATTAN
Date : 11/4/2020 7:30:53 PM
Submitted :

NYPD provided the following information:
The Police Department responded to the complaint and took action to fix the condition.

When I arrived home I put complains in 311 for cars blocking the bike line.
My complains were done at 7,31, and at 8 pm the complains where CLOSED!

Nothing happened to all of these car parked in the bike line and they put in danger several lives. Really?
How the police department took action to fix the condition? Why are these violations closed? Why I didn't
have a chance to submit my photos and these car got a ticket? Why not?

Here is a summary of other important components that put in danger the safety of cyclist:

2-Not enough bike lines, so bikers have to go on traffic. This is extremely important when there is a bus going, as is the case now in River Side Drive with the 125-100 of HUDSON RIVER GREENWAY closed. If there is a bus going at the same time that a biker is going, the bus has to be very careful of the biker and don't crash on her/him. The bus should abandon the right line since bikers when no bike line goes in the right side of the street. Easy solution, bike lines all over

3- People go texting with headphones on crossing the bike line without looking, and they are not aware that there are bikes beyond cars. Please put fines to pedestrian crossing over bike lines without having a light. (I saw my partner falling down in Prince street to avoid killing a pedestrian) he has brushes and broken cell phone nothing serious but annoying.

4- Most bike Detours are unsafe. As the one in HUDSON RIVER GREENWAY, who caused two accidents, and that I reported on election day November 3 2020 to several officials when a biker crash her face against the hill in 79th street. He didn't die but have a bad accident.

5- Bike lines are not clean of snow with urgency. Last time it snow, they were not clean until it rains. Amazing! Riding a bike is not a luxury, is a need.

6-Same rules for manual and electrical bikes but with a huge difference in speed. It is not wise.

**NO OVERSIGHT OVER VEHICLES BLOCKING THE BIKE LINE IN MANHATTAN
IS NORMAL and YOU know it.
What do you do about it?
THE LACK OF ACTION IS NEGLIGENCE!**

The door of a car cut through my leg once. I broke my clavicle another time. A third time I smashed my shoulder against the road. I am very lucky I am alive. Others are death. At 54, I am still biking because I have the right to do so and I believe biking is safer in COVID times and an environmentally friendly way to move in a city. But I am scare of loosing my life every time I go on the road.

Every time I ride my bike I am scare of dying. And I am scare everyday when my husband leave for work that I am not going to see him again and I am going to get a message form the police that a car run over my husband.

I am really cautious when ridding and will hardly made a mistake that can cause an accident but the cars in the road are not that cautious and the government is not protecting cyclist by not having a system in site that oversight the laws that prevent cars from stopping/parking in the bike lines.



Please help me to have a safe ride.! Please keep bike lines clear.!

One easy way is to give fines to vehicles blocking the bike lines with cars. Police can go in bikes along the bike lines in the City and give fines to vehicles blocking them.

Jana Leo de Blas

Civic Gaps

<http://fundacionmosis.com/CivicGaps/civic-gaps/>

347 301 3070

January 11, 2021

To: New York City Council - Committee on Transportation - Tuesday, January 12, 2021 @ 10am

Re: Testimony in Support of Bill for Civilian Enforcement of Placard Corruption

I am a resident of City Council District 14, Fernando Cabrera's district, in the Bronx. Every day, I observe private cars of NYPD and other City officials parked illegally, among other places, on the sidewalk median along the Grand Concourse just south of 175th Street. (please see photos attached and twitter thread for additional evidence) These vehicles are parked day and night and not in response to any emergency or official business from what I can tell. The individuals display on their dash, various types of documents indicating their NYPD or City agency affiliation, and as a result, they receive no summonses and are permitted to occupy the Grand Concourse median sidewalks as a free personal parking lot.

As you are likely aware, DOT just completed Phase 3 of the Grand Concourse revitalization capital project, which built the gorgeous new sidewalk medians, bike lanes, planters, and other traffic calming structures in the Bronx. These NYPD and City agency placard abusers are defacing and negating all that good work by storing their personal vehicles on this new infrastructure meant to beautify our neighborhood and make the Grand Concourse safer.

These illegally parked vehicles cause the following negative consequences for our community:

- Block sight lines and prevent merging car traffic from seeing folks traveling in the bike lane and vice versa
- Prevent pedestrians from using the median sidewalks for socially distanced walks
- Cause a dangerous condition for subway riders by parking on top of subway grates
- Negate the beauty of an otherwise new and open, tree and shrub lined median
- Send a signal to others that it's acceptable to store vehicles illegally in our neighborhood
- Erode the trust in, respect for, and legitimacy of NYPD and city officials because of this rampant corruption, and advertise the attitude that the laws don't apply to them

Every day, residents of our community are confronted with the illegal and callous actions of these corrupt individuals ostentatiously - right on the main thoroughfare of our neighborhood. The individuals occupying the middle of the Grand Concourse with their personal vehicles, and those who enable them, signal a complete lack of care and respect for their neighbors.

When reports to 311 are made, the requests are immediately closed with the responding precinct stating that the violations have been corrected when they have not. Thus, the NYPD is compounding this illegal behavior by producing a false document.

Throughout the city, and especially in the Bronx, the NYPD have shown they are unable or unwilling to enforce placard corruption and illegal parking by their own or by city officials.

Because of this, a civilian enforcement mechanism that is outside the jurisdiction of NYPD enforcement is needed.

For these reasons, I support Int 2159-2020 creating civilian enforcement for illegal parking.

Thank you,
Lucia Deng
Bronx 10453

<https://twitter.com/LuciaDLite/status/1343583003952508928>





1:05
LTE

< My Requests
Details
📄

CURRENT STATUS

CLOSED 12/28/2020 11:40am

RESPONSE

The Police Department responded to the complaint and took action to fix the condition.

YOUR REQUEST

REQUEST TYPE REQUEST #
 City Vehicles or Permits 311-04987444

DATE REPORTED
 12/28/2020 10:34am

ADDRESS
 1749 Grand Concourse
 Bronx

YOUR DETAILS/DESCRIPTION
 This vehicle is parked on the new medians on the Grand Concourse every day and night. Are they on official business or engaging in illegal parking / corruption / placard abuse?

REQUEST DATE
RECENT UPDATE

- City Vehicles or Permits**

1749 Grand Concourse

Dec 28, 2020

CLOSED >
- City Vehicles or Permits**

1748 Grand Concourse

Dec 28, 2020

CLOSED >
- City Vehicles or Permits**

1749 Grand Concourse

Dec 28, 2020

CLOSED >
- City Vehicles or Permits**

1749 Grand Concourse

Dec 28, 2020

CLOSED >
- City Vehicles or Permits**

1749 Grand Concourse

Dec 28, 2020

CLOSED >
- City Vehicles or Permits**

1749 Grand Concourse

Dec 28, 2020

CLOSED >
- City Vehicles or Permits**

1749 Grand Concourse

CLOSED >

Today

Status

Request

Alerts

Settings

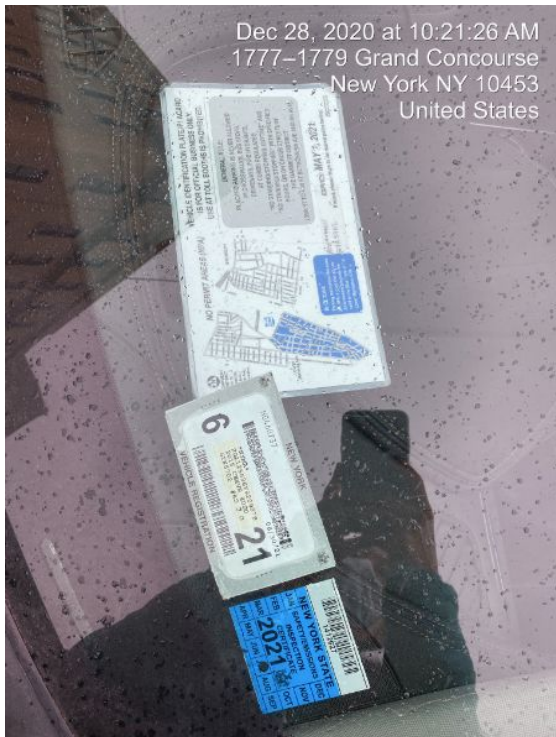




Dec 28, 2020 at 10:21:14 AM
Grand Concourse
New York NY 10453
United States
174-175 Sts



Dec 28, 2020 at 10:19:48 AM
1749 Grand Concourse
New York NY 10453
United States



Dec 28, 2020 at 10:21:26 AM
1777-1779 Grand Concourse
New York NY 10453
United States

"As a frequent cyclist around New York City, I am extremely concerned not just for the safety of myself and fellow cyclists, but the blatant disregard for them that is shown by government officials, police, pedestrians, drivers, and others.

A lot of people speak out about the need for change, but not enough is being done.

One of the biggest issues facing our city, I believe, is the mindset of its drivers. And these drivers include those who drive in it every day, those who do it only once in a while, or those who end up in the city accidentally, because many GPS units, along with Google and Apple Maps will suggest drivers go through New York City rather than around it to go from Long Island to New Jersey for example and vice versa. Many people unfamiliar with the region, aren't aware their GPS is doing this until it's too late.

But as you know, drivers in this city don't really care about any rules. This is especially true when drivers only need "a minute to do something." Whether it's an errand, or picking someone up, drivers will pull over anywhere whether it's in front of a hydrant, a no standing zone, a bike lane, or they'll double park. The rules are irrelevant and simply having them isn't enough.

Though the city needs to make huge infrastructure changes, to allow our roads to match those with some of the best in Europe, I think there is a simple addition the city can add, and this can literally be added starting tomorrow.

Many drivers in this city are never even THINKING about cyclists. And I don't mean that they don't care about cyclists. I mean, they don't even know not to care. Just like while you're in your car, you likely never think about the best material to use to manufacture ballet slippers, I think many drivers in New York City don't have cyclists on their mind at all. This has to change.

The city should order a minimum of 120,000 street signs that have language telling drivers to be aware of cyclists. You can come to a consensus of what the best wording is to use, but an example might be, "PLEASE BE AWARE OF CYCLISTS" or "CYCLISTS MAY BE NEXT TO YOU BUT NOT VISIBLE. PLEASE BE ALERT" or "CYCLISTS ARE ALL AROUND YOU. PLEASE BE CAREFUL." You could even use all three of these, and have them rotating through at each intersection.

These signs should be placed in **highly visible** locations to all drivers at every single intersection across all five boroughs of New York City. They should be large. They should be seen. And they should continue to be seen at night. Ideally, they'd hang right next to the traffic lights. (Putting them on the sidewalk, similar to where you'd find a parking or stop sign would allow them to easily be obstructed. This is an unacceptable location for the signs. If the signs are not visible to every driver in every lane on every street in all of New York City, the signs are in the wrong spot).

And having signs only every few intersections is worthless. It gives an opportunity for drivers to potentially never see the signs, depending on the route they take or the distance they drive. There should be no reason for any driver to drive any distance of at least 1 block/intersection without seeing at least one sign, regardless of the location they are in.

We must hammer home the point to all drivers in the city that cyclists are all around them all the time. And we have to give them reason to take an extra pause before pulling into a park space, or into a driveway, or pulling over for any reason. But as stated previously, most drivers don't have cyclists on their mind. They don't even THINK to look for a cyclist before making a turn or pulling over. It doesn't matter how many press conferences you hold, how many press releases you send out, how many interviews you give to news media of any kind. People may not listen to your press conferences, read your press releases, or even consume news. Signs at every intersection in New York City, are the best method for communicating to drivers. And this is a change that can be implemented immediately. You can literally place the order for all this signage later this afternoon. It requires no construction, no road closures, no disruption of any kind. And it's a street sign. Who is going to oppose a street sign? Nobody. This change can be implemented immediately, and it's a great first step to get drivers to be thinking about cyclists every time they get into their vehicles.

Thank you."

Mark Wishnia

To whom it may concern,

I am a life long New Yorker who has lived in 3 of the city's boroughs and currently reside in Manhattan. My primary means of transportation are the subway and bike commuting (especially during COVID). This bill is a great first step in ensuring safety for our most vulnerable bike commuters, children. Youth commuters are the least experienced and least able to navigate around unplanned obstacles. In the long run it is critical that the measures in this bill be extended to all bike lanes throughout the city. Illegal and dangerous parking in bike lanes reduce the citizens' willingness to commute via personal mobility vehicles. Alternative transportation options are critical to reducing emissions, increasing equity, and public health. I would also like to see the expansion of dedicated drop off street lanes so that drivers have options to access schools. In the long run, it would be even more helpful to see the Open Streets program extended to cover at least street bordering every school in the city. As many of you may know, a child was killed in Brooklyn very recently in a tragic hit and run. The city owes it to those families

- Niger Little-Poole

Testimony for Int 2159-2020

(1) I am strongly in support of Intro 2159-2020 and encourage the council to pass it.

The bill can be improved by amending it in the following ways:

- increase the initial fine from \$175 to a higher amount
- double each subsequent fine, so the second fine is \$350, the third fine is \$700, and so on
- remove the "within 1320 feet of a school" restriction
- expanding the areas covered to include no stopping, no parking and no standing zones

- - -

(2) The current enforcement system is not working. Of the 8245 blocked bike lane complaints to 311 in 2020, only 109 (1.3%) resulted in a summons. 76% resulted in no action.

Here's a detailed breakdown:

Count	Resolution	percent
2720	observed no evidence of the violation at that time	33.0%
2405	those responsible for the condition were gone	29.2%
1190	determined that police action was not necessary	14.4%
4	officers were unable to gain entry into the premises	0.0%
		76.6%
1581	took action to fix the condition	19.2%
109	issued a summons in response to the complaint	1.3%
		20.5%
34	This complaint does not fall under the Police Department's jurisdiction	0.4%

- 11 insufficient contact information 0.1%
0.5%
- 170 provided additional information below 2.1%
- 14 (no descriptor) 0.2%
- 7 a report was prepared 0.1%

(3) Chief Royster's suggestion that the reason NYPD vehicles park illegally is because of a lack of awareness (and that signage will fix the problem) lacks all credibility. This assertion doesn't pass the smell test and is an insult to the intelligence of all New Yorkers.

Until the NYPD starts towing cars and docking pay, nothing will change.

The NYPD should immediately and regularly release data on complaints about illegal parking by its members, and the resulting discipline imposed (if any).

(4)

(a) The problem of illegally parked city vehicles is not limited to those with placards. Reflective vests, homemade signs, PBA cards, toy badges and other paraphernalia.

The city should immediately tow any car with such items on or about the dashboard, and only release the car when the items have been confiscated.

(b) The city should immediately tow any vehicle with a missing, bent, defaced or illegally covered license plate. The car should not be returned until the plates have been replaced and the covers removed.

(5) I support an increase in the number of loading zones in both commercial and residential areas. Every block should have at least one space reserved for delivery trucks during business hours.

(6) Acting DOT commissioner's Margaret Forgiione hand-wringing about the complexity of the IT system is unsupported by ... reality. I am a professional software engineer with over 20 years of experience. I

can assure you that such a system would not be complex or complicated. The TLC and DEP programs are good models for this. Tools already exist.

Paul Schreiber

Most people looking at Int 2159 will recognize that it is not an ideal system for addressing parking violations. New York City is nowhere near an ideal system, though. Our system is so rife with corruption that this proposal does, in fact, represent a responsible, realistic, and pragmatic step forward.

The City Council is aware that the practices generally described with the term “placard abuse” are corruption. Last year, the City Council made some real effort to address the placard corruption problem by enacting several laws to reform the existing system. Sadly, the corruption is so deeply entrenched our City departments have systematically violated these laws.

Local Law 4 required the New York Police Department and New York City Department of Transportation to revoke placards for three or more violations for misusing the placard. As the *New York Post* reported in September (<https://nypost.com/2020/09/14/de-blasios-three-strikes-policy-nails-two-parking-placard-abusers/>), and as we continue to exhaustively document on Twitter, there has been virtually no compliance with this law. Chronic offenders with scores of violations are allowed to continue endangering the public day after day, despite the publicity, in open defiance of the law (ex.: this whole thread: <https://twitter.com/placardabuse/status/1347232656476565505>).

Local Law 5 required the City to develop and publish a comprehensive plan for managing parking placards. The law required the plan to be published on the City’s website no later than December 20, 2020. It still has not been published, and our requests to City Hall for information have been ignored.

Local Law 6 required the NYPD to study and provide monthly reports on placard corruption, and the Department of Investigation to investigate placard corruption and issue a report no later than September 30, 2020. The NYPD did not issue any of its reports, nor did DOI conduct any investigation. After we began making inquiries about DOI’s missing report, the DOI collaborated with the target of their investigation and issued a joint letter with a patently bogus excuse blaming the COVID-19 for their refusal to comply with the law, even though the NYPD was already in clear violation of the law, withholding its required monthly report before the first case of COVID-19 was reported in New York.

Local Law 7 reiterated that it is illegal for City vehicles to obstruct bicycle lanes, bus lanes, sidewalks, crosswalks, or fire hydrants. Our Twitter feed routinely shows that there is no compliance, and no attempt at enforcement. The NYPD continues to use bicycle lanes as permanent parking at the 28th Precinct and Transit District 30, for example. There is never a moment when the bus lane at the 52nd Precinct is not blocked. Meanwhile, the way the FDNY blocks an entire block of public sidewalk with their illegally parked vehicles on Flatbush outside their headquarters is nothing short of a civic disgrace. We could go on, but you just go scroll our Twitter feed.

Local Law 8 is an exception to this pattern, insomuch as the required changes were made to the 311 system. This law required 311 to accept photographic evidence on complaints for most types of placard corruption. Nonetheless, despite the mounting pile of evidence that continues to be logged into the system, the NYPD continues to refuse to take necessary action and still routinely closes complaints with false reports.

Local Law 9 tightened the requirements around the issuance of parking permits. Nonetheless, the NYPD continues to allow all manner of fraudulent placards and other paraphernalia to be used for illicit parking privileges, rendering this law effectively moot.

Additionally, the Mayor used COVID-19 as a bogus excuse to eliminate specialized units at both the NYPD and NYCDOT that were supposed to focus on placard enforcement. Even on the surface, it is nonsense to claim that eliminating enforcement was a necessary budget savings, since any legitimate enforcement effort would yield ticket fines producing much more revenue than the cost of the enforcement. Since the NYPD unit never actually performed any real enforcement, cutting a do-nothing unit may have resulted in some actual reduction in fraudulent spending. At the same time, formation of the DOT unit was continuously delayed, so it appears that the pandemic provided a cover story to get out of a commitment the Mayor desperately wanted to avoid.

The NYPD also illegally seized more public streets and parks, which they used as their own parking lots, under the guise of “security” for Black Matter protests this year. This has continued long after any protest activity had wound down. The NYPD has long had a consistent habit of closing public streets in less politically powerful communities or under the pretext of emergencies, and then making every effort to avoid returning them to their rightful community users. The street in front of the 48th Precinct, for example, has been illegally barricaded for years, diverting trucks off the designated route to find their way via an unmarked detour on busier pedestrian streets.

Given this reality, we applaud the City Council for continuing its efforts to devise a workaround that bypasses the entrenched corruption at the NYPD and DOI. The proposal will enable concerned residents to provide the facts to a competent and responsive authority who will finally take the appropriate action that the NYPD has so long denied. At long last, there can be some measure of accountability and restoration of lawful conditions to our streets.

It is also important to address another layer of NYPD corruption intrinsically intertwined with their placard corruption: perjury. The @placardabuse Twitter account was started after a couple of New Yorkers who had struggled to have some placard corruption problems addressed listened to the NYPD’s testimony before the City Council in January 2016. Senior NYPD officials testified:

In three-year period so that’s 2013, 14, and 15 the Internal Affairs Bureau and the NYPD receives 68 complaints of NYPD placard forgeries of which they substantiated 56 of those. As far as improperly using the placards etcetera in that same three-year period... So 13, 14, 15 our investigative unit received approximately 480 some odd complaints of placard abuse. So that’s using restricted parking placards in improper areas etcetera. So that’s kind of the universe of what we have.

Based on the number of violations they had seen and the complaints they had personally made, they knew these numbers were impossibly low for the entirety of New York City. They had started to recognize a pattern over the years: the NYPD would show up to hearings, downplay the problem, lie about their enforcement efforts, follow up with a very brief and publicized “crackdown” that targeted the full-out frauds without addressing any of the members of the placard class, and then return to business as usual. These citizens decided that consistent documentation for the public was necessary to demonstrate how prevalent, persistent, and insidious the corruption actually is. Five years and a few City Council hearings later, the pattern of NYPD misinformation has not changed. At their last

appearance, the NYPD had barely updated their fraudulent speaking points. We will be surprised if their performance differs the next time they appear to testify.

When the NYPD next appears at a City Council hearing to testify about parking enforcement, there are a number of points we hope the City Council will question them about and hold them accountable for any perjury:

- Why are chronic violators allowed to continue breaking the law for months on end—or more—when they are routinely brought to the attention of the NYPD?
- How is it possible that violators continue to engage in placard corruption—with the same placards—after the NYPD has reported that they were disciplined?
- Why does the NYPD systematically violate the rights of people with disabilities by blocking their ability to safely use sidewalks and crosswalks?
- On whose orders are Traffic Enforcement Agents passing over cars that display placards without issuing tickets?
- Who is responsible for disciplining Integrity Control Officers who hand out blank placards or fail to collect expired placards? Or allow police officers to use illegal equipment (excessively tinted windows, license plate covers, etc.) on the personal vehicles that they park at the precinct?
- Why is there no discipline when NYPD officers close 311 complaints with false statements?
- Why did the Chief of Department tell the press that illegal parking in bus stops and bus lanes is not allowed (<https://www.thecity.nyc/2020/8/27/21404388/nypd-cars-still-dangerously-block-bus-stops>), when it is an easily observable fact that the NYPD continues to illegally block these locations every day?
- Why is the NYPD not towing vehicles and charging their owners with possession of a forged instrument when they display fake placards?
- Why are the unions that represent members of the NYPD and FDNY allowed to produce their own fake placards?

While a workaround is a realistic and pragmatic way to start restoring lawful conditions to our streets, it is not a substitute for rooting out the corruption that has been poisoning our law enforcement. Answers to these questions, and prosecution for any perjury that shields bad actors from accountability, are necessary to shine a light on some very dark corners of our broken system. We look forward to a robust effort by the City Council to clean up our streets and the halls of 1 Police Plaza.

placardabuse@gmail.com

Ryan Frank
315 Central Park West
New York, NY 10025
646.283.0997

January 11, 2021

Thank you for holding this hearing to consider legislation to reform how parking laws are reported and enforced. My name is Ryan Frank. I'm a resident of the Upper West Side and work in Sunset Park.

Over the past two years, I have become increasingly concerned and frustrated by the abundance of illegal parking throughout the city that goes unchecked and is unenforced. Far too often illegal parking is committed by individuals who should be leading by example: city employees who are issued a parking placard and take advantage of this privilege, an act commonly referred to as placard abuse.

I started to raise concern about placard abuse after a friend of mine, Devra Freeland, was killed in 2019 while riding her bike on Bushwick Avenue. She was one of 29 cyclist fatalities in NYC that year. After Devra's death I became more conscious of the scourge of illegal parking and how it creates unsafe road conditions for cyclists, as well as pedestrians and drivers.

One spot that has been consistently problematic is the bike lane on Columbus Avenue near the 20th Precinct, not far from where I live on the Upper West Side. Cars with NYPD placards are often parked there illegally, partially obstructing a bike lane and a no standing zone. I have contacted the 20th Precinct, attended Community Council meetings, spoken with Helen Rosenthal's office and issued numerous 311 complaints, all to no avail. The problem persists and in my experience the NYPD has been unhelpful and unwilling to address this issue. I've witnessed and heard about countless other placard abuse hot spots throughout the city, all of which have the same problem -- the NYPD unwilling to ticket and cars parked illegally.

Every day throughout the city I see cars parked illegally without consequence. Not only is this unfair but it's also unsafe. Go to most any NYPD precinct, FDNY station house, or City Government office and you'll see personal vehicles with city-issued placards -- and often only some kind of paraphernalia on the dash -- parked on the sidewalk, in crosswalks, in bike lanes, in bus lanes, and in no standing zones. Unfortunately, police officers are often the worst offenders and rarely police themselves and their fellow municipal employees when it comes to unsafe and illegal parking.

A parking placard should not be a free pass to park anywhere you like. Too often they are misused at the expense of public safety and quality of life. A city employee with a parking placard should not be able to ignore the rules for the sake of their convenience. Cyclists need bike lanes, pedestrians -- particularly the elderly and people with disabilities -- need unobstructed sidewalks, commuters need dedicated bus lanes, Moreover, when those in a

Ryan Frank
315 Central Park West
New York, NY 10025
646.283.0997

position of power abuse their privileges and don't follow the law, it sets a horrible example to everyone else.

New Yorkers deserve more transparency and accountability. The NYPD should be relieved of a task they've proven unwilling to do. The Department of Transportation, with the guidance of the City Council and local Community Boards, collectively determines how our public space is allocated. Parking enforcement should be a duty assigned to the DOT, with direct community assistance. Placard abuse is corruption, plain and simple. Passing this legislation will create a better, fairer, and more equitable system of checks and balances of our public space, for the benefit and safety of all New Yorkers.

Thank you for your attention and commitment to this issue.

Committee Chair Rodriguez and other Committee Councilmembers,

I am offering my testimony in support of Int 2159-2020, sponsored by my local Councilmember Stephen Levin of District 33.

The Covid-19 crisis has redefined mobility in New York. While many New Yorkers have turned to registering new cars and SUVs in order to appropriately social distance away from mass transit and protect themselves from contagion risk on often crowded buses, thousands of others like myself have taken up more walking and cycling as our means of mobility to and from essential activities.

This rise in cycling has not been fully supported by the City, even though it is the more sustainable and healthy alternative to traveling by car or SUV. I live in downtown Brooklyn, which has been blessed with many mobility options such as the Fulton St, Jay St, and Livingstone St bus lanes, as well as dedicated bike lanes (e.g. Jay St, Schermerhorn St, DeKalb Ave) and generally well-developed pedestrian infrastructure. I also frequently use the Brooklyn Greenway via Flushing and Kent Avenues to bike into Queens for essential activities.

Without fail however, every single day of the week, many of these sidewalks, busways and bike lanes in my community are encroached upon by illegally parked personal vehicles and delivery trucks creating dangerous conditions for cyclists, especially new ones like myself, and rendering ineffective the taxpayer investments made by the City into creating these pedestrian crossings, bus lanes, and bike lanes. Reporting such encroachment to 311 rarely produces appropriate enforcement because either the NYPD fails to respond altogether citing its prioritization of bigger emergencies, or by the time the NYPD responds, it is unable (or unwilling) to find evidence of the reported encroachment. As a result, the offenders face no penalties to change their inconsiderate and unsafe behaviour much to the frustration of the community.

Reporting these violations to 311 alone has NOT been working. Councilmember Levin has been well aware of the challenges faced by his District constituents, and I welcome the solution he has proposed with Int 2159-2020.

Signing Int 2159-2020 into Local Law would create an avenue for appropriate enforcement for keeping pedestrian-, cyclist-, and transit infrastructure clear of encroachment while keeping the NYPD free to focus on other priority tasks. Cyclists who are forced off bike lanes into fast moving general traffic because of illegally parked vehicles in bike lanes, pedestrians that must enter into traffic lanes to avoid vehicles parked on crosswalks and sidewalks, as well as bus riders whose trips are delayed by delivery trucks parked in busways, would feel reassured that our needs for safe and equitable mobility in New York City were being addressed by the Council. We can support and contribute to safer streets for all by ourselves reporting illegal obstructions of bike lanes, busways, and crosswalks on a real-time basis, and knowing that these dangerous safety violations will go before the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings for real action and not merely disregarded by 311, NYC DOT, and the NYPD as a low-importance quality of life issues.

While I hope the Committee will eventually consider expanding the geographic purview of the Local Law, Councilmember Levin's proposal to initially focus on a radial distance of 1,320 feet from school buildings is a good start. Pedestrian, cyclist, and bus rider safety is especially important when it comes to ensuring the well-being of the City's school-going children, their families, and their teachers and staff.

Please signal your commitment to pedestrian, cyclist and bus rider safety by signing Int 2159-2020 into Local Law.

Thank you.

Simon Lund
70 Forsyth St, NY NY 10036

To: The Committee on Transportation
Oversight - Illegal Parking and Bike Lanes

I've been riding a bike in New York for 25 years and I currently commute daily from Chinatown to Midtown (44th&9th). In the last year of commuting this route, I would say I see around 6 cars and trucks parked in the bike lane each way in the four mile route and in the year, I have never seen a vehicle getting a ticket. I would suggest that the NYPD put some officers on bicycles and patrol the bike lanes, the ticketing would improve the situation and pay for the officers time and change drivers attitudes to the bike lane. When I heard about this hearing a week ago, I started taking photos on my cell on my commute to have something concrete to show, here is a typical day:



A moving truck in SOHO, I feel for them but its very common these days and it's a pincer between a outdoor dining and them so I'm fighting with cars for the road... and they are blocking a hydrant. The two blocks on Prince between W. Broadway and Sullivan has delivery trucks standing every day.



It's 10 am across from Madison Square Garden, sort of early for a slice, now I have to cut into the turn lane... same difference, the drivers were not going to yield to me anyway.



Union Square around 7pm, right after the siege of the congress, the NYPD has vans ready for some sort of protest and they are using the bike lane as their staging area with three vans in a row blocking both ways. This is not untypical and I can think of a policeman's private car that is always parked in the bike lane Bleecker St. and W. 10th with their police ID on the dashboard in the evening.

Councilmembers,

Please accept this written testimony in regard to Int 2159-2020 and the public hearing held in the Committee on Transportation January 12, 2021.

Thank you for taking time to seek innovative ways to make a difference for residents of New York City and your consideration of the comments below.

We would like to lend our support and assistance as the council and city agencies look for creative ways to address the important issues outlined in the hearing today. The expertise within Hayden AI can help the council members by providing useful information and help city agencies with tangible tools and solutions.

A few issues were made clear in today's hearing:

1. Good information (organized and trustworthy data) is lacking for decision making and outcome measurement.
2. The objectives of Vision Zero, with safety at the core, is laudable and meaningful.
3. Equitable application of the law should be non-negotiable.

We believe the scale of the challenges faced by New York City requires creative and thoughtful use of technology.

Technology can empower residents, agencies, and policy makers by improving safety and mobility.

For context, Hayden AI Technologies, Inc., ("Hayden AI", www.hayden.ai) has developed an AI-powered data platform for smart and safe city applications. We partner with the world's most innovative cities to deploy our vision-based mobile solution to a city's existing transportation fleet (i.e. school buses, transit buses, street sweepers, garbage trucks, patrol cars, etc.) to collect real-time data for enforcement of traffic regulations, smart city use cases, and powerful urban analytics.

Our system uses state of the art technology and builds high resolution, semantically annotated 3D maps to provide insights, understand context, and reason in real time at high precision. The tools are useful in collecting data for decision making, detecting events, processing violations, and adapting to real time inputs.

In addition to exceptional technical talent, Hayden AI includes recognized thought leaders in transportation, government technology, and ethics. We are locally engaged in the bus lane camera pilot program and are certain the technology can, and should, be adopted to solve additional issues including bicycle lane and school zone safety.

We look forward to being of service.

Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

Stuart McKee
COO



Steve Olson

January 5, 2021

Dear City Council,

First, a big thank you to Councilman Levin for bringing this legislation to the Committee and allowing constituents to address this ongoing and dangerous issue.

I am a relatively casual cyclist by New York City standards - I bike on weekends and to restaurants and businesses nearby, and don't usually travel farther than a couple miles from my apartment in North Brooklyn. That being said, dangerous illegal parking is an issue that I see occur very frequently, and it seems to be prevalent in every area.

A trip to Astoria on the Vernon Boulevard bike lane is fraught with illegal parking. The new bike lane on Grand Street often has multiple vehicles that force the cyclist to unpredictably join into the car/traffic lane. Long Island City is very close by, but illegal parking makes visits there unpredictable and dangerous.

Cyclists don't want to have to break their stride to report illegal parking! But as the number of injured cyclists grows in this city, the gloom feeling sets in every cyclist that their time is coming - that they will be struck by a car or its door. This legislation allows cyclists to keep ourselves and other cyclists safe, which does not seem like too much to be asking for.

I urge every councilmember to vote yes on this bill.

Sincerely,

Steve Olson

Tuesday, January 12, 2021

To Transportation Committee members,

My name is Dimitris Koutoumbas, I am a resident of Washington Heights and biking has been my main mode of transportation for getting around since moving to the city a couple years ago. It's been very rewarding to see the positive changes happening on our streets to the benefit of SAFETY and slower travel speeds but in most times these changes have been happening reactively. The city has not done enough to proactively encourage its citizens to try alternative modes of transportation.

Through my experience, I can clearly say that many drivers do not see a reason to share the street with anyone but themselves. It's very discouraging and INFURIATING for a bicyclist to continuously see double parked vehicles along Saint Nicholas and Amsterdam Avenue, the ONLY two major thoroughfares UPTOWN with dedicated bike lanes (even though they are unprotected; many would argue that unprotected lanes are not safe infrastructure for bicyclists). The culture needs to change and it all starts from LEADERSHIP at the top.

I am a strong believer that if you design proper streets for the needs of all users enforcement shouldn't be required. I can say that through my experience the NYPD has done a terrible job in enforcing drivers to obey the rules of the law; they should not be in a position of enforcement when they themselves disregard the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians through blocking bike lanes, blocking crosswalks, blocking sidewalks and converting blocks into parking lots. I do not understand why police officers need to patrol their neighborhood in the comfort of their SUV when NYC is extremely walkable. It is bad for community relations, the environment and the safety of other users of the street.

I have also been an avid user of the REPORTED NYC app, which provides a simplified way to submit feedback to 311 and the TLC Commission regarding any infractions by drivers on the road. I have many times submitted photographs through the app, which allows the TLC to prosecute drivers and if guilty pay a penalty. Even though this is a terrific app, I do not have any direct incentive to keep submitting evidence of traffic violations. The bill introduced today would benefit ALL citizens to proactively engage with government and help with revenue the city desperately needs. I UNDERSTAND that this should not be the only solution to our problems. The city has to start looking at the transportation system HOLISTICALLY and recognize that in order to properly implement VISION ZERO, government should not rely on enforcement but adequately engineer its streets to the benefit of ALL users. Thank you.

Drivers that get into physical altercations with cyclists/pedestrians/bus drivers for calling them out are bullies. Building policy to placate them enables that culture.

Dimitris Koutoumbas

Hello Council,

My name is Samir Lavingia and I am a West Village resident. Thanks for taking my testimony.

The time for an ideal solution is over and there is no single fix that will solve all of our parking woes. We need an all of the above approach instead of just doing more studies and more planning. We should increase speed camera converge, better street design, AND civilian enforcement.

There was much talk about administrative burden, but there is already a great example of a similar process going extremely well. The TLC process is amazing. There is no conflict as I can take a photo, walk away, and report it out of eye sight. I have reported TLC vehicles with just a photo for parking in bike-lanes and on the sidewalk.

The idea that we shouldn't enforce traffic law because motorists might get really mad and get in a fight is absurd. If people are getting into fights because they are getting caught for parking in the bike lane, they should not have a license or be allowed to drive. The city should immediately take away those driving privileges and those motorists should have incredibly heavy consequences for acting in a way that is dangerous New Yorkers. We shouldn't just let people with anger issues park wherever they want. There need to be consequences for blocking bike lanes, bus lanes, and crosswalks.

The honest truth here is that we shouldn't have to be in this position at all. In an ideal world the City Council wouldn't have had to come up with this idea at all. If the DOT was proactive, we wouldn't be here. If the NYPD and the DOT were properly enforcing traffic law, citizens would not have to do this role at all.

All in all, the DOT should stop using the fact that doing stuff takes effort as an excuse. The DOT should be pushing to do things, instead of just complaining that doing anything will take effort. The DOT's culture of no is leading to many preventable deaths.

Thank you for letting me speak.

Illegal parking in bike lanes

Dear City Council,

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to submit testimony regarding illegal parking in bike lanes.

Every time I bike to and from work, my trip is impeded by 5 or more cars that are parked in the uptown and downtown bike lanes outside of the NYPD 28th precinct. These cars mostly appear to be personal use vehicles, lacking permits, city plates, or nypd signage. Squad cars often take up bike lane space, as well. This is a dangerous area to bike in. One block north is a major intersection, and the next block is a 5-way intersection that is very hard to bike across. The precinct's flagrant abuse of the bike lane for parking poses a danger to bicyclists, as well as the car users that have to weave around the double parked cars.

Similarly, outside of the 1st precinct, there are always police vehicles parked in the bike lane. This neighborhood is already hostile to bicyclists. Many streets are one way or cobblestones, rendering them inaccessible to bicyclists. The nearby entrances to the west side highway and Lincoln tunnel pose another threat to bicycle safety. Police parking in the bike lane endangers bicyclists further in areas that are already hard to bike in.

Thanks for your time,

Vera Kahn

Dear Committee Members,

In 2019, I was almost crushed by an MTA Bus which broke the law and almost killed me on a crosswalk, with the crossing light on. MTA Bus Company covered up the incident.

Vision Zero and the current traffic laws and enforcement are not working. There are over 1 billion estimated traffic offenses annually in New York City. Traffic violence is out of control and has destroyed many lives, polluted our neighborhoods, gridlocked our city and endangered especially our young and old. The Police Union has publicly acknowledged they have lost all control.

As a result of my near-death experience, I proposed a new law, based on existing Department of Environment Idling scheme and TLC laws to make our streets safer. Drivers break the law because NYPD simply cannot or is not willing to enforce the law. Yet an army of citizens is willing to enforce the law and make the streets safer in our neighborhoods. Citizens working towards Vision Zero.

I am extremely pleased to see that the Council is proposing to move forward. The law will:

1. Significantly improve safety
2. Increase revenue when the budget situation is very bad (although I'd rather every drove safely and no fines were issued)
3. Require very little investment and a massive return on investment made

I have dealt with both the DEP and TLC.

1. The Department of Environment idling system is unfortunately too complicated. It requires far too much evidence and discourages citizens from filing.
2. The Taxi and Limousine Commission has an excellent, highly effective system that convicts based on photographic evidence that encourages citizens to report violations.

I would be happy to volunteer time to work with NYC to make this a reality with my detailed knowledge of both the DEP and TLC processes.

I'd also like the opportunity to present a proposal to reduce deaths and injuries by a minimum 50% within 1 year and massively increase revenue to NYC. The current laws and technologies could be enhanced to end traffic violence in New York once and for all. Its simply a question of political will.

Finally, I sincerely thank the Committee for bringing this critical bill and for their time today.

iainr24@gmail.com