

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION

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Wednesday, December 7, 2022
Start: 10:49 AM
Recess: 12:00 PM

HELD AT: COMMITTEE ROOM, CITY HALL

B E F O R E: James F. Gennaro, Chair

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Jennifer Gutiérrez
Kamillah Hanks
Robert F. Holden
Ari Kagan
Julie Menin
Francisco P. Moya
Sandy Nurse
Lincoln Restler

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

2 ZOOM HOST: The Committee on Environmental
3 Protection, located in the Committee Room, recorded
4 on December 7, 2022, by Natalie Patovy.

5 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Quiet please. We're ready to
6 go.

7 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: We're good? We have to
8 wait? Okay.

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Ricky, if you could start the
10 webinar for Zoom please? Ricky, could you please
11 start the webinar? Once again Ricky if you could
12 please start the webinar on Zoom?

13 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: We're good? Okay. Good
14 morning I am Jim Gennaro, Chair of the Committee on
15 Environmental Protection, and today we'll be holding
16 a vote on two important resolutions that can help
17 lead us forward on the road to a sustainable future.
18 Resolution 258B, authored by me, speaks to the Clean
19 Water, Clean Air, Green Jobs Bond Act which was
20 passed as a statewide ballot initiative on election
21 day. The bond act received overwhelming support from
22 the voters in New York City. New York City's
23 geographical location makes it particularly
24 vulnerable to the threat of rising sea levels as well
25 as the increased frequency of hurricanes and tropical

2 storms. The Clean Water, Clean Air, And Green Jobs
3 Bond Act enables the issuance of \$4.2 billion in
4 bonds to finance critical environmental restoration
5 and resiliency projects across the state of New York,
6 allocating \$1.2 billion towards reducing flood risk
7 in vulnerable areas, \$1.5 billion was climate change
8 mitigation efforts, \$650 million toward water quality
9 improvement and resilient infrastructure, and \$650
10 million towards the preservation and enhancement of
11 open space and recreational amenities.

12 We need these resources to build a sustainable
13 future. That's the good news.

14 Unfortunately, when it comes to the equitable
15 allocation of funds for New York City's environment,
16 environmental justice communities, the state has been
17 far less than fair to New York City in the past, from
18 the 1996 Environmental bond act to the present, Hat
19 goes to state funding and federal funding at the
20 state, through the New York State Department of
21 Environmental Conservation, DEC, is authorized to
22 allocate to cities and counties throughout the state.

23 As a former DEC Deputy Commissioner for New York
24 City Sustainability and Resiliency from 2014 to 2020,
25 I saw firsthand how New York City got shortchanged

2 with regard to critical environmental funding.

3 That's why I resigned that job to run for council
4 again.

5 Well, I'm back and I intend to advocate for fair
6 share for environmental funding for the city. Hence
7 this resolution on the Bond Act.

8 Here's a recent example of how the city gets less
9 environmental funding than it should: This year, the
10 New York City DEP received just over 2% of the funds
11 distributed through the New York State Water
12 Infrastructure Improvement Act. 2% of the funds for
13 an agency (DEP) that serves more than 50% of the
14 state's population. People may not know that the DEP
15 has 1 million customers outside of New York City in
16 the four counties north of New York City.

17 This is a grave injustice and cannot be allowed
18 to stand. This resolution calls on Governor Holcomb
19 to ensure that our city is able to access funds from
20 the Clean Water, Clean Air, And Green Jobs Bond Act
21 in a way that is reflective of the state's population
22 and our dire need as an island city vulnerable to
23 storm surge, with underserved communities crying out
24 for climate justice.

2 I am most grateful to all the co-sponsors of this
3 resolution.

4 Resolution 169 authored by Councilmember Lincoln
5 Restler, a member of this committee, calls for the
6 Climate Action Council to draft in the governor to
7 implement a final climate action scoping plan that
8 commits meeting CLC EPA targets and a bold and
9 climate and environmental justice action in New York.

10 I have much, much more on my statement on Reso 169
11 and how important it is, Ut I think it's best to hear
12 about this resolution from its author. And it's a
13 privilege to me in a moment to recognize

14 Councilmember Restler for a statement on his
15 resolution, which I am proud to co-sponsor with many
16 other Councilmembers. Before I recognize Lincoln, I
17 just want to recognize that we're joined by

18 Councilmember Holden, who is remote, Councilmember
19 Moya, who is remote with us, Councilmember Gutiérrez,

20 Councilmember Hanks, Councilmember Menin,
21 Councilmember Nurse, Councilmember Restler, and
22 Councilmember Kagan. And with that it is my

23 privilege to recognize Councilmember Restler for his
24 statement.

2 COUNCILMEMBER RESTLER: Thank you so much Chair
3 Gennaro and colleagues. I want to thank you for your
4 support of resolution 69. I just think it's... it's
5 important to note, a few years ago, the State
6 Legislature passed landmark legislation, the CLCPA,
7 which is the Climate Leadership and Community
8 Protection Act, that set incredibly bold and
9 ambitious benchmarks for us to achieve as a state to
10 achieve a net carb... you know, a carbon neutral
11 future. And I'm really excited for us to achieve
12 those ambitious goals, but we're waiting for the
13 specifics. And that's what the Climate Action
14 Council has to do... has to accomplish with the
15 policies that they release as soon as later this
16 month. And our resolution provides some very clear
17 direction for what our expectations are of the
18 Climate Action Council, for how we can boldly reduce
19 our carbon emissions. We are leading in this council
20 with Local Law 97. Hopefully, we will accomplish
21 curbside mandatory composting, and so many other
22 ambitious and innovative solutions to address the
23 climate crisis that we are facing. And I think it's
24 really important that as the largest municipality in
25 the state, we speak with one voice as nearly a

2 majority of New Yorkers to demand that the Climate
3 Action Council achieve sensible, ambitious policies
4 that will reduce our carbon emissions and... and
5 that's what our resolution lays out. And I'm excited
6 that will speak in one voice as the City of New York
7 to direct Governor Hochul and the CAC to do just
8 that. So thank you very much.

9 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you, Councilmember
10 Restler. I wish to be associated with Councilmember
11 Restler's remarks. And before we call for vote, I'd
12 like to thank the terrific committee staff who have
13 done such great work over the years. Our Counsel,
14 Samara Swanson to my right, Policy Analyst Rick
15 Achala, Financial Analysts, Andrew Lane Lawless, and
16 Brad Reed, who is with us today from the
17 Infrastructure Division, and finally, last but not
18 least, my Legislative Director Nabi Gore for all
19 their hard work.

20 And with that said, Billy, has anyone... is here
21 anyone here wishing to be heard about... about
22 anything? No? Okay. Seeing none, I would ask... I
23 would ask Billy to set us up and call the roll. I...
24 I urge a yes vote on both items, which I presume will
25 be coupled.

1 COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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2 CLERK: Good morning. My three minutes. William
3 Martin, Committee Clerk. Roll call vote Committee on
4 Environmental Protection, Resolutions 169 and 258B.
5 Items are coupled. Chair Gennaro?

6 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Aye.

7 CLERK: Holden?

8 COUNCILMEMBER HOLDEN: I vote aye.

9 CLERK: Thank you. Moya?

10 COUNCILMEMBER MOYA: I vote aye.

11 CLERK: Thank you. Gutiérrez?

12 COUNCILMEMBER GUTIÉRREZ: I vote aye.

13 CLERK: Hanks?

14 COUNCILMEMBER HANKS: Aye.

15 CLERK: Menin? Nurse?

16 COUNCILMEMBER NURSE: I vote aye.

17 CLERK: Restler?

18 COUNCILMEMBER RESTLER: Aye.

19 CLERK: Thank you. Kagan?

20 COUNCILMEMBER KAGAN: No. No on 169. No on
21 both.

22 CLERK: Thank you. By a vote of eight in the
23 affirmative, one of the negative, and no abstentions,
24 all items have been adopted by the committee. Mr.
25 Chair, that is a full committee.

2 CHAIRPERSON GENNARO: Thank you very much to the
3 members, and to Billy, and the staff of the
4 committee. And with that this vote is adjourned.

5 [GAVEL]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date December 12, 2022