

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS

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May 10, 2023
Start: 10:50 a.m.
Recess: 11:01 a.m.

HELD AT: 250 BROADWAY - COMMITTEE ROOM, 14TH
FLOOR

B E F O R E: Pierina Ana Sanchez, Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Shaun Abreu
Alexa Aviles
Charles Barron
Tiffany Caban
David M. Carr
Eric Dinowitz
Oswald Feliz
Crystal Hudson

OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS ATTENDING:

Jumaane Williams, Public Advocate

2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: This is a microphone
3 check for the Committee on Housing and Buildings,
4 recorded on May 10, 2023, located on the 14th Floor,
5 by Nazly Paytuvi.

6 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Good morning and
7 welcome to today's New York City Council vote for the
8 Committee on Housing and Buildings.

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

11 Chair, we are ready to begin.

12 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: [GAVEL] Thank you
13 and good morning. I am Council Member Pierina
14 Sanchez, Chair of the Committee on Housing and
15 Buildings.

16 We are here today to vote on three bills,
17 two of which are aimed at strengthening HPD's
18 enforcement of the Housing Maintenance Code and to
19 help tenants who make recurring complaints that never
20 get resolved.

21 The first two bills we are voting on
22 today were heard by the Committee at a hearing on
23 examining the City's tools for enforcing the Housing
24 Maintenance Code on December 6, 2022. At the hearing,
25 we heard testimony regarding the state of code

2 enforcement in the City of New York with a particular
3 focus on the Administration's tools to keep New
4 Yorkers safe and healthy within their homes and what
5 the Administration could do in better enforcing the
6 Housing Maintenance Code. A key theme throughout this
7 hearing was the need for solutions that strengthened
8 code enforcement throughout the City. New Yorkers
9 should not need to call 3-1-1 time and time again to
10 report the same issues only to have their landlord
11 ignore the complaint or violation. If violations are
12 not being corrected in a timely fashion, landlords
13 must be held accountable. To that end, we are voting
14 on two bills today aimed at expanding compliance.

15 First, Proposed Introduction 583A
16 sponsored by the Public Advocate would increase
17 penalties for many violations issued by HPD. In
18 addition, HPD would be required to create a
19 Certification of Correction Watchlist for 100
20 buildings that have falsely certified conditions as
21 corrected and would disallow such buildings from
22 curing violations unless HPD inspectors themselves
23 conduct the reinspection.

24 As it gets warmer out, we still have our
25 sites on the next winter. The second bill, Proposed

2 Intro. 434A sponsored by me, expands the Heat Sensor
3 Program which was established by Local Law 18 of 2020
4 to select buildings with a history of heat and hot
5 water violations to install internet-capable
6 temporary reporting devices. Given early successes of
7 this program despite implementation challenges,
8 mostly compliance by landlords and information lags
9 to the Department, this bill would double the number
10 of buildings in the program, require building owners
11 to submit more regular temporary reading data to HPD
12 every 30 days so that HPD can better act on the data,
13 and require HPD to conduct more regular inspections
14 of these heat-offending buildings. The expansion of
15 this program will hold bad actors accountable when
16 they refuse to maintain heat in buildings and relieve
17 tenants of having to constantly follow up with HPD to
18 have heat issues addressed.

19 Together, these two bills target bad
20 actors by increasing the cost to landlords who
21 repeatedly fail to address HPD violations.

22 In addition, we are voting on Proposed
23 Intro. 875B sponsored by me at the request of the
24 Mayor relating to technical corrections,
25 clarifications, and modifications to the provisions

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2 of New York City's Construction Codes, and it will
3 also enable the Department of Buildings to promulgate
4 rules relating to renewable energy credits pursuant
5 to Local Law 97. We first heard this bill on January
6 24, 2023.

7 I am joined today by Members of this
8 Committee, Council Member Dinowitz, Council Member
9 Abreu, Council Member Carr, Council Member Hudson,
10 Council Member Caban, Council Member Alexa Aviles,
11 and Council Member Barron.

12 With that, I will now ask the Clerk to
13 call the roll.

14 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Good
15 morning. William Martin, Committee Clerk. Roll call
16 vote Committee on Housing and Buildings, all items
17 are coupled. Chair Sanchez.

18 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Aye on all.

19 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Dinowitz.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: Aye on all.

21 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Abreu.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER ABREU: Aye.

23 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Aviles.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER AVILES: Aye on all.

25 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Barron.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Madam Chair, did
3 you say requested by the Mayor?

4 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: It was at the
5 request of the Mayor, yes.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Oh my gosh.
7 Nervously aye on all.

8 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: It's a good bill. I
9 promise.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: I know. I read it.

11 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Caban.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CABAN: Aye on all.

13 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Hudson.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER HUDSON: Aye on all.

15 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Carr.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: No on Intro. 583A
17 and aye on the rest.

18 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Thank
19 you. By a vote of eight in the affirmative, zero in
20 the negative, and no abstentions, the Committee has
21 adopted Proposed Introductions 434A and 875B and with
22 a vote of seven in the affirmative, one in the
23 negative, and no abstentions, Proposed Introduction
24 583A is adopted as well.

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2 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thanks everybody. We
3 will now hear remarks from our Public Advocate.

4 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JUMAANE WILLIAMS: Thank
5 you very much. As mentioned, my name is Jumaane
6 Williams, and I'm the Public Advocate of the City of
7 New York.

8 I want to thank you very much, Chair
9 Sanchez, and the Members of the Committee on Housing
10 and Buildings for holding this vote.

11 During today's vote, I am asking my
12 Colleagues to support bill Intro. 0583 which
13 increases the penalties for many Housing Code
14 violations issued by the Department of Housing, HPD
15 including self-certifications done by landlords or
16 landlords that falsely claim that their violations
17 were corrected. This bill ensures that the violations
18 issued are not persistently ignored by landlords and
19 does not amount to a slap on the wrist as it will
20 create a sense of urgency to actually correct the
21 violations. HPD is also required to post a
22 Certification of Correction Watchlist on their
23 website every year before January 15th. This provides
24 additional monitoring of landlords and the buildings
25 with many existing violations and further protection

2 for tenants facing unsafe conditions. In order for
3 landlords to have their violations removed, HPD must
4 conduct an inspection to verify that the violation
5 has been corrected.

6 In alignment with this bill, my office
7 and I have released a Worst Landlord List on an
8 annual basis. Our 2022 Worst Landlord Watchlist was
9 released this past December. This bill closes the gap
10 for landlords getting away with not upholding the
11 responsibilities that come with ownership. Last
12 year's Worst Landlord Watchlist had the most
13 violations in the history of the list including
14 thousands of immediately hazardous violations in
15 hundreds of buildings around the city. Basically, we
16 have worse housing stock and higher rents. There
17 continues to be a trend of abuse and neglect by some
18 landlords in New York City. As we move through 2023,
19 it's critical that we take swift action to hold the
20 worst landlords accountable. We need to invest the
21 resources to stop them from handling these violations
22 and fines as negligible or the cost of doing business
23 as well as combat the notions that making profit is
24 more vital than their own tenants.

2 I urge my Colleagues to prioritize
3 passing this bill. We must choose a path that allows
4 us to adequately invest and support New Yorkers who
5 are living here. Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much,
7 Public Advocate, and I'm proud to support your bill.
8 This is a really great piece of legislation, and I'm
9 glad my Colleagues on the Committee have voted in
10 support, and we'll get it done tomorrow afternoon at
11 Stated.

12 Thank you. We will continue to hold the
13 vote open for just a few more minutes.

14 PUBLIC ADVOCATE JUMAANE WILLIAMS: I just
15 wanted to ask the Clerk to add my name to the other
16 bills. Thank you.

17 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN:
18 Continuation roll call, Committee on Housing and
19 Buildings. Council Member Feliz.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: Aye on all.

21 COMMITTEE CLERK WILLIAM MARTIN: Final
22 vote Committee on Housing and Buildings, we have
23 Proposed Introductions 434A and 875B adopted by the
24 Council with nine in the affirmative, zero in the
25 negative, and no abstentions, and Proposed

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2 Introduction 583A with a vote of eight in the
3 affirmative, one in the negative, and no abstentions.
4 Madam Chair, that is a full Committee.

5 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Thank you so much.
6 I'd like to thank my Colleagues, members of the
7 public, and everyone who is tuned into today's
8 hearing as well as our Committee Staff for today's
9 preparation.

10 With that, this hearing is closed.

11 [GAVEL]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date May 13, 2023