

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON YOUTH SERVICES

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March 16, 2016

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HELD AT: Council Chambers-City Hall

B E F O R E: DEBORAH ROSE
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Mathieu Eugene
Margaret S. Chin
Jumaane D. Williams
Laurie A. Cumbo

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

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Commissioner
NYC Department of Youth and Community
Development

Alan Cheng
Deputy Commissioner
NYC Department of Youth and Community
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Jagdeen Phanor
Associate Commissioner
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Youth and Community Programs
NY Road Runners

Madison Hernandez
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Girl Scouts of Greater New York

Kate Bancks
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Daisy Torres
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PowerPlay NYC

Scott Daly
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Ingrid Bentil
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City's First Readers

Deana Murtha
Representative
Jumpstart

Harriet Lessel
Director of Government Contracts and
Advocacy
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Dr. Caitlin Canfield
NYU Langone Health
Video Interaction Project

Kristen Aldrich
Manager of Early Childhood Education
New York Public Library

Laurie Williams
Executive Director
Reach Out and Read

1 COMMITTEE ON YOUTH SERVICES 7

2 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: The hearing of the
3 Youth Services Budget Committee is called to order.

4 Good afternoon, everyone.

5 ALL: Good afternoon.

6 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: That's very good. I
7 like audience participation.

8 Good afternoon and welcome to the Fiscal
9 2019 Budget Oversight Hearing for the Department and
10 Community Development. I am Council Member Debi
11 Rose, the chair of the Committee on Youth Services,
12 and I am pleased to be joined by my fellow council
13 members: Council Member Eugene, Council Member Chin
14 and Council Member Williams. And we will hear today
15 from DYCD Commissioner Bill Chong, Deputy
16 Commissioner Alan Cheng and Associate Commissioner
17 Jagdeen Phanor, along with the agency's team of
18 program specific deputy and assistant commissioners.
19 Thank you all for joining us.

20 First and foremost, we are here to
21 discuss DYCD's \$689.4 million budget for Fiscal 2019.
22 The Preliminary Budget includes only one new need for
23 DYCD: supporting programming for Runaway and
24 Homeless Youth under the city's new NYC Unity
25 Initiative.

What is just as interesting, as frequently seemed to be the case for DYCD, is what the preliminary budget does not include; namely, as the new chair of this committee, I am concerned by the administration's decision to discontinue support for middle school summer programming under School's Out NYC or SONY, leaving 22,800 children without services this summer. There are varying numbers of what number of students will be affected, and when this administration began its first term, we heard about the importance of protecting 12 to 14 year olds from negative influences outside of their homes and schools. It seems disingenuous now for us as a city to turn around and to suggest that this is no longer a priority.

As a legislative body, representing 8.5 million of our fellow New Yorkers, it is our responsibility, as the Council, to ensure that the city's budget is as fair, transparent and accountable as it can possibly be. This is why this year beyond simply discussing funding levels, the Council is also taking a deeper dive into the structure of each agency's budget. For DYCD, this means we will have a conversation about the limited number of units of

appropriation used to organize funding for 10 different program areas. This committee will also review DYCD's performance so far this year, as reported in the Fiscal 2018 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report or PMMR.

Hereto I believe we will have just as interesting a conversation about what is not included in the PMMR as about what is. DYCD oversees services provided to more than 150,000 New Yorkers each year, and while the Preliminary Mayor's Management Report captures many of these programs, it fails to discuss many others; like Cornerstone, for instance, never enters the conversation in the report, nor do whole subsections of the department's program, COMPASS, enter into this report.

The Preliminary Mayor's Management also does a poor job of contextualizing the data it provides. When we look particularly at programming and services for some of New York's most vulnerable residents, like DYCD's Runaway and Homeless population or RHY, we want to have the clearest sense possible of where city services are making strides and where we have more work to do.

DYCD has been tasked with managing the preparation for the city's next generation of leaders to fulfill their potential and programs like the Comprehensive After School System; COMPASS, and the Summer Youth Employment Program; SYEP, are intended to help young New Yorkers rise to the next level. I, myself, am a product of SYEP, and my experiences from that very first job have helped to make me who I am today. I hope that's okay with you; who I am. Okay. [laughter] At the committee we want to ensure that these programs are serving as many young people as possible and I look forward to a productive conversation.

But before we begin, I would like to thank my legislative budget director, Edwina Martin; my legislative aide, Lisa Thompson and my coordinator, Isa Rogers. I would also like to thank our committee staff, Paul Sinegal, who is the counsel to the committee; Jessica Ackerman, Senior Finance Analyst to the committee and Kevin Kotowski [phonetic], who is the policy analyst to this committee; also Commissioner Chong, Deputy Commissioner Cheng and Associate Commissioner Phanor. And our counsel will now swear you in. Thank you.

COUNSEL: In accordance with the rules of the council, I will administer the affirmation to the witnesses from the mayoral administration. Would you raise your right hands? Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth in your testimony before this committee and to respond honestly to council members' questions?

ALL: Yes.

COUNSEL: Would you please state your names for the record?

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Bill Chong, Commissioner.

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR: Jagdeen Phanor, Associate Commissioner.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER CHENG: Alan Cheng, Deputy Commissioner.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: You may begin your testimony, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Good afternoon, Chair Rose and members of the Committee of Youth Services. I'm Bill Chong, Commissioner of Department of Youth and Community Development. I'm joined by Deputy Commissioner for Administration Alan Cheng and

Chief Financial Officer and Associate Commissioner
Jagdeen Phanor.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify
today on DYCD's Fiscal Year 2019 Preliminary Budget.

Since coming into office, Mayor de
Blasio has demonstrated unwavering commitment to
youth, families and communities. Through his efforts
and the support of the city council, DYCD's budget
has more than doubled from \$408.6 million to \$836.3
million this fiscal year. Virtually every DYCD
program and seen an increased investment under Mayor
de Blasio, from COMPASS and SONYC after-school
programs, Beacon and Cornerstone Community Centers,
the Summer Youth Employment Program and the Runaway
and Homeless Youth Services. Quite simply, our
growth has been unprecedented.

DYCD's Fiscal 2019 Preliminary Budget
stands at \$689.4 million. This budget continues to
build on our progress, serving young people and
families, while being fiscally responsible and
cautious during these times of uncertainty. For
example, the President's Federal Fiscal Year 2019
Budget Proposal includes the elimination of the
Community Services Block Grant and a 40% reduction in

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funding. These cuts would be harmful to thousands of young people and families in the city. We continue to closely monitor the federal budget process.

In 2017, the Summer Youth Employment Program set another record, serving nearly 70,000 young people. We thank the city council for your strong support of SYEP. By working closely together, we have nearly doubled the amount of young people served since the Mayor took office. We also served a record number of Ladders for Leaders participants, with 1,855 young people accessing professional internships in sectors such as real estate, finance, fashion, technology, and city government.

With 80% of the SYEP funding now baselined, DYCD and its providers have more time to plan for the program's implementation each year. We opened the SYEP application period on February 5th. This is the second year in a row that we have released it early and we have just extended the application deadline to March 30th.

As part of the Mayor's Action Plan for Neighborhood Safety, SYEP will continue to offer jobs to young people residing 15 NYCHA developments with

the highest crime rates. In addition to our efforts, NYCHA and the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice Services are also conducting special outreach to these developments through job fairs and NYCHA Digital vans to assist young people with the online application.

This summer we are launching a school-based SYEP model with 18 providers at 32 vocational and technical high schools across all five boroughs. This pilot program will provide participants with summer job experiences that complement their school year academic and after-school activities and interests.

While serving some of our city's most vulnerable youth, the administration has made extraordinary investments of over \$20 million in services for Runaway and Homeless Youth. Most of the increased funding supports the expansion of Runaway and Homeless Youth residential beds, which will triple to 753 funded beds by Fiscal Year 2019. RHY's Fiscal Year 2019 Preliminary Budget level is at \$40 million and mostly city tax levy funding.

Since last month's hearing on the three Runaway and Homeless Youth bills that passed last

1 week, we are pleased to report that an additional 12
2 beds have opened. There are now 557 beds open and
3 available to young people, an additional 196 beds are
4 in the pipeline and we anticipate that 96 of those
5 bed will be certified and open by June 30th of this
6 year. We are grateful to our providers for their
7 diligence in helping to expand capacity at such a
8 rapid pace. We are on target to have all 753 beds
9 open in Fiscal 2019. We look forward to continued
10 discussions with the council on how best to serve
11 runaway and homeless young people.
12

13 When the Beacon program reached their 25th
14 anniversary last year, we were very pleased to add
15 resources to each Beacon. This represented the first
16 increase since Mayor Dinkins launched the Beacons
17 under his Safe City, Safe Streets initiative in 1991,
18 just to give you some time frame. Beacon funding has
19 increased again in the current fiscal year. Overall,
20 per Beacon funding, each Beacon has risen from an
21 average of \$346,000 to \$550,000. By Fiscal 2020 will
22 be over \$600.00, once all the cost of living
23 adjustments have been phased in.

24 We also added 11 new Beacon programs,
25 increasing the total number of Beacons to 91 sites.

The new sites expand at the reach of our comprehensive school-based community centers to thousands of additional New Yorkers and underserved schools and communities. Together these sites can serve over 109,000 youth and families annually.

Cornerstone community centers provide youth with safe plans to grow with engaging activities, including recreation, STEM, academic enrichment, project-based learning and social and emotional support. These community centers engage over 18,000 young people and families annually at 94 NYCHA developments across the city. For the second year in a row, several programs will be sponsoring "Spring into Health Fairs" in early April. These fairs will include health and wellness activities and information that promote wellness and healthcare access. There will be a total of 35 fairs in all five boroughs during the week of April 10th to April 14th. In addition to Cornerstone, some Beacon will also be health fair sites this year.

DYCD's COMPASS and SONYC after-school programs continue to be very popular and successful in meeting the needs of youth and families. They complement what is learned during the school day,

while also offering recreation, enrichment and cultural activities to support and strengthen the overall development of young people. As of the end of January nearly 120,000 young people were enrolled in these programs.

With an investment of \$13.4 million, including \$7.3 million from the council, we have been able to serve 1,400 participants in Adult Literacy programs. We also expanded technical assistance and professional training, which included individual coaching, digital literacy, curriculum development and teacher training.

As you have heard in my testimony today, despite budget uncertainties at the state and federal level, the FY 2019 Preliminary Budget continues to place DYCD in a very strong position to fund quality programs and improve lives and create opportunities to advance socioeconomically. We look forward to continuing to work with the city council to support New York's youth, families and communities.

Thank you again for the chance to testify today. We are ready to answer any questions.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you, Commissioner and before I start with the questions, I

just want to acknowledge the young people who came out today to participate in the rally in support to save Summer SONYC and the advocates. I want to say thank you so much for being here. That's a shout out. (laughter] Thank you.

And so Fiscal Budget 2019, the Preliminary Budget for DYCD, sees very little change from the previous years; in fact, very minimal change. How does DYCD prioritize its requests for new or increased funding and were there any other new needs that DYCD proposed that have not been included in Fiscal 2019 Preliminary Budget?

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Well, let me say that we're in a very strong position because as you know, in previous years under the previous administration, we faced enormous cuts, so to have stability to have in all our core programs is the key that we've been focusing on because as you know, the city is facing a great deal of uncertainty, both at the federal and state level. Some of our major federal programs face elimination potentially in the President's budget, so we wanted to be prudent, cautious and focus on quality. So that's been our

main priority; to maintain the core programs that we have.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: So Commissioner, I understand you wanting to be prudent and looking realistically at what the forecast might be, but if you don't request the monies, how can we fight to get the funding for you? Were there any monies that you requested in the preliminary budget that you were requested that were not reflected in the preliminary budget?

COMMISSIONER CHONG: I think the main thing for us is to maintain stability of the programs, so I'm happy with what we have, though obviously it's an ongoing budget process. Things will get added I'm sure during the year, like [inaudible] employment last year the minimum wage adjustment was added in the executive budget, so there are things that we know will happen, like minimum wage increases, so that is my main concern and I'm will happen in the executive.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: The Fiscal 2019 Preliminary Budget only includes one new need for DYCD, which is Support NYC Unity Project. Can you tell us more about how DYCD... or what role you'll play

1
2 in the Unity Project and the extent to which that
3 role will expand in the future?

4 COMMISSIONER CHONG: Well, it's a very
5 discreet investment. I think it's less a million.
6 Is that correct? And it's really to fund a second
7 24-hour drop-in center in the city for homeless
8 youth. We recognize that the lives of young people
9 who are homeless are not 9-5 and to the extent we can
10 extend hours of service, the first 24-hour drop-in
11 center was open I believe in 2014; '14 or '15 and
12 then clearly there's a recognition that the more
13 opportunities we give young people to access services
14 after traditional hours... and in fact, I visited the
15 one in Queens that became a 24-hour drop-in center
16 with the First Lady and their caseload I think
17 tripled just simply by adding evening hours and the
18 24-hours service, so it's been a meaningful... a
19 relatively small, but meaningful investment.

20 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: So are we on target to
21 meet the projected goals that we have set for RHY for
22 the New York City Unity Project?

23 COMMISSIONER CHONG: I think so. I mean
24 it's... I was surprised in after a couple of months of
25 them getting the money that their caseloads had

tripled in a very short period of time, so I think it shows that we understand the needs of young people who are homeless or potentially homeless; that the easier we make it to access services, the more likely they will access those services.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And since the adoption of the Fiscal 2018 Budget, the administration identified \$8 million in spending in re-estimates of DYCD and of this \$3 million represents underspending in SYEP. Where does the other \$5 million come from and to what extent has DYCD discussed COLA and minimum wage increases for service contracts for OMB?

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Jagdeen will answer this, hm?

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR: Thank you for your question. I want to make a correction. It's not \$8 million. I believe it's \$5 million. I think... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Could... could you... [crosstalk]

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR: I believe it's... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Speak into the... [crosstalk]

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR: Sorry. I believe it's \$5 million that we had to meet. Are we talking about the efficiencies?

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Yeah, the [inaudible]
Instead of... [crosstalk]

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR: Yeah.
[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Three?

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR: It was \$5 million and it was split between two initiatives and so underspending is general agency underspending. It wasn't specifically due to Summer Youth Employment.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Would it be correct to say that it's actually \$8 million since adoption?

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR: It may be... I don't think it's [inaudible] I will get back to you on that, but in regards to the COLA... you also had a question about the COLA? DYCD is doing extremely well with the COLA. We report up to a young lady named Jayler [phonetic] at the Mayor's office. To date, I think we have gotten at least about 80% of our COLA. We've been getting responses and we've been moving swiftly to get them registered.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Okay. In terms of your head count, in Fiscal 2019, the Preliminary Budget reduced the total budgeted head count for DYCD from its current level of 528 full-time positions to 519. How many positions in the current Fiscal 2018 Budget are actually filled and can you provide this committee with a disaggregation of unfilled positions by program area and job title?

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR: So first, let me start. We have 528 allotted budgeted head count. To date, on board we have 492. That represents approximately DYCD being 93% staffed up with probably about a 7% variance and due to attrition and other things, it's a decent level for s to have. In terms of where those 36 vacancies are, they're scattered throughout the agency, so it's not one specific program area that's impacted adversely, but they're just scattered throughout the agency. We'll be happy to get back to you exactly where the vacancies are, but I don't have that at that time.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you. And for Fiscal Year 2018, more than 40 million of the city council's discretionary contracts were managed through one of DYCD's program areas labeled "other

youth programs.” The Preliminary Budget proposes to reduce head count for other youth programs from 51 to 45. How will this impact the rate at which council discretionary contracts will be processed?

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR: So let me respond. I think I didn’t answer one of your previously asked questions and it will probably respond to that. I think you asked about the 528 going to 519 and during adopt all of those slots are kind of restored back. It’s primarily CEO funding. That’s one time funding. It’s not baselined and so several of those positions fall out and then every year in adopt they come back in and the other differences are due to some offsets; some increase of RHY head count; incremental head count that we’ve received in addition to grand funding. So we eventually get back to 528 in the out years.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Okay, is that this... and that’s also for the council discretionary contracts that are being... [crosstalk]

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR: So I need... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Overseen by you?
{crosstalk}

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR: A little bit more insight as to where you're seeing that drop off.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Yeah, I think it might be how it's described and when you say "other youth services," I think the assumption is discretionary and it's not discretionary. It's one year restoration of... is it the Young Adult Internship Pro... which program is it? Yeah, it's the Center for... not the Center for Economic Opportunity, but it's the Office of Economic Opportunity. The funding for that program; not discretionary, but for those programs has been one year year to year, so that money gets added back into the executive budget. It's not the head count for discretionary.

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR: and if I may add, we're fully staffed for discretionary. I actually checked with one of my colleagues here, and we don't have any vacancies in the discretionary.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: So you're saying you are fully staffed for discretionary.

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR: Right, because... [crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Yes.

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR: You're asking how it impacted... [crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Right.

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR: The... yes, the council.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: But in last year's Preliminary Budget there was a proposal you know of a similar reduction in head count to the other youth programs that didn't happen.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: But the other youth... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Why... [crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Programs are not discretionary. I think it's a question of how it's labeled. It's these... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Mm-hm.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: It's these... because these programs at the Center for Economic Opportunity funds us year to year. That's the discrepancy that gets added back in the executive budget.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: So where is the head count for the discretionary funding indicated?

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR: Again, so we don't get funding for the head count, but if I

1
2 may, we have four U of As. Two of them are PSU of
3 A's and the way that those are constructed, you have
4 and administrative one and you have one that's
5 programmatic and then the other two U of As, one is
6 devoted to youth and the other to community
7 development. So I just think that it's the way that
8 it's categorized in the... I think you guys are looking
9 at budget functions and we'll be happy to clarify and
10 go offline and meet to see where the discrepancy is
11 happening.

12 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And so you can provide
13 for us where our discretionary money and the head
14 count... [crosstalk]

15 COMMISSIONER CHONG: Right.

16 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR: We
17 definitely correlate... [crosstalk]

18 COMMISSIONER CHONG: Right.

19 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR:
20 Definitely the discretionary money is... [crosstalk]

21 COMMISSIONER CHONG: Right.

22 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR: But we've
23 never gotten a head count... [crosstalk]

24 COMMISSIONER CHONG: Right.
25

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR:

Associated with processing... [crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Yeah.

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR: A count.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: That's an important point. The money that the council gives us is completely to go to groups. We've never in the history of DYCD; as long as I've been with the organization for 15 years, have gotten money from the council for staff. We self-fund that and there's no plan to reduce staffing there.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Okay, in Fiscal Year 2018, the Mayor's Management Report indicated that there was a drastic drop in program monitoring by DYCD in Fiscal Year 2017. This time... [crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Last year, this committee raised questions about DYCD's... [crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: The VENDEX, right?

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Capacity...

[interposing]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Mm-hm.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Capacity for current staffing levels. What measures has DYCD taken to improve your oversight capacity?

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR: Give us a second.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Okay.

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR: To...

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Because I think what you're looking at is the number of actual site monitoring visits has not gone down. The... and is Araco [phonetic] here? Yeah, so she can explain it in greater detail. So the Mayor's Office of Contract Services is moving to a new system called PASSPort, and don't ask me what the acronym stands for...

[interposing]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Mm-hm.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: But so while the actual evaluations have been done, the data system, which captures this stuff, hasn't been uploaded yet to reflect in the PPMR. Is that an accurate layperson description?

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: So are you saying the Preliminary Mayor's Management Report misreported or didn't accurately... [crosstalk]

DANA CANTELMi: So... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Report?

DANA CANTELMi: Dana Cantelmi, ACCO for
DYCD. So... [crosstalk]

COUNSEL: I should swear you in.

DANA CANTELMi: Sure.

COUNSEL: Excuse me. Do you affirm to
tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the
truth in your testimony before this committee and to
respond honestly to council member's questions?

DANA CANTELMi: Yes.

COUNSEL: Please state your name for the
record.

DANA CANTELMi: Dana Cantelmi, Agency
Chief Contracting Officer for DYCD. So the Mayor's
Management Report reflects the actual VENDEX
performance evaluations that MOCS handles with the
transition to PASSPort, which is their new automated
system. We actually... we're monitoring our programs,
but the information is not in PASSPort at this time.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: So we'd be happy to
give you a hard copy; a spreadsheet of it.

[interposing]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Mm-hm.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: But because this new data system that MOCS has hasn't been able to capture all the data, we actually can give you the actual number. There's been no drop. It's just that the data system that the Mayor's Office of Contract Services hasn't really been able to collect the data in a way that the Mayor's Office of Operation can... [crosstalk]

DANA CANTELMY: And also just to add, that is the MOCS system. In terms of what DYCD does, we do monitor our programs ongoing. We have our own internal monitoring system that we have for each of our program areas, but the actual report that you're looking at, it just reflects the annual VENDEX. That's part of the procurement policy board rules.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And how long will it take before PASSPort sort of sorts... [crosstalk]

DANA CANTELMY: Well, I mean it's... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: This out... [crosstalk]

DANA CANTELMY: On... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And...

[interposing]

1
2 DANA CANTELM: It's... yeah, there's
3 ongoing discussions with the Mayor's Office and with
4 DYCD. There are all agencies that are under this
5 right now, but again, I really can't speak to where
6 MOCS is with the development of the performance
7 evaluations.

8 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: OMB produces a
9 separate document known as the Budget Function
10 Analysis to show the programmatic distribution of
11 funding levels. While it appears that this is a
12 useful tool, ultimately the council will surpass the
13 city's budget each year at the unit of appropriation
14 level DYCD has 10 program areas, but only four units
15 of appropriation. How does the current budget model
16 benefit DYCD?

17 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR: So we've
18 worked with... just before we met and we hear you and
19 what we've done thus far is we've been working with
20 OMB. Hopefully there's hopes that we can get it
21 through, but we've worked with OMB to try to make it
22 more transparent. So as you know, it's the U of A
23 level, then the budget code. The budget code level
24 is what gives it the unique description of the
25

1
2 programs, right? That's just how the charter works
3 and so what we... [crosstalk]

4 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Mm-hm.

5 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR: Need to
6 do is definitely change some our naming conventions
7 because we know that they are a bit outdated and we
8 are working on that and even today, OMB and I spoke
9 about this, so we're going to be updating some of the
10 conventions, but I think it's very transparent in the
11 way that our program's very distinctive budget codes
12 that lead to programs and specific data that you
13 would need.

14 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: [**inaudible**] It seems
15 as if we're talking like with apples and oranges and
16 you need to like update that system because what
17 we're doing is we vote on Units of Appropriation and
18 not on the codes and so it's very difficult for us to
19 determine what we're voting on and what we're
20 getting.

21 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR: No, I
22 understand... [crosstalk]

23 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: So is there some... are
24 you in the process of looking at Units of
25

Appropriation versus codes to bring your budget into synch with you know, what we're doing?

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR: So I want to be... from an operational perspective for the agency, and we definitely want to be transparent for the council. From an operational perspective, the budget codes are how we do business and how we do contracting and the U of A level is a higher level that providers... what you're asking for would interrupt business with our providers because they don't operate on a Unit of Appropriation level. They operate on a budget level and it's the budget level that is able to let us know which providers belong to which specific program. So that higher level... I understand you 100%, but that higher level and creating more U of As is not going to... or in my estimation is just going to make our process a little bit more... and not just for DYCD, but for our providers a little bit more difficult.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: But you have now four Units of Appropriation. Why can't you correspond or correlate Units of Appropriation with program areas? Why is that... take me through the process that makes that difficult to achieve.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: [off mic] I think if you... Oh, I think if you look under each Unit of Appropriation, there are budget codes, right? Is that... am I correct? Yeah, so this document, which I think is in the public doc... is this published?

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR: [off mic] They may get something similar, but not this.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: I think we can provide this to you. So under each Unit of Appropriation there are budget codes, so it's almost like under the Unit of Appropriation you can look at details under each one, so I think we get to the same place where we want to be, which is under this Unit of Appropriation how much is spent for this expense; how much is spent for that expense, so I think it is... and it's... I mean you know, because we are audited all the time, we have to account for every single dollar and where there's federal money and there's state money, so we have very detailed budget codes, which probably gives you more detail than you would really want, but it's under each Unit of Appropriation. So I think you get to what you want by looking at the budget codes.

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR: We hear you and we will work with OMB and we will try to... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Yeah.

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER PHANOR: Get to where it is that you want. [background noise]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: So you do understand what we're saying; that we are expecting to see Units of Appropriation for the programs; for every program because this is the... we vote on Units of Appropriation. So... [crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHIONG: Well... well... well... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: How... when... how long would it take you to be able to meet that standard for us to vote on your budget?

COMMISSIONER CHONG: This is a larger discussion with OMB, so as Jagdeen says, we'll bring it back to OMB, but in the interim, if you want any more details of spending, we'd be happy to provide it to you.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Commissioner, I appreciate that and I know that you will make that information available to the committee chair and to

the committee; however, we are looking to standardize what the council is doing in terms of the budget and we vote on Units of Appropriation and so we are trying to bring everybody into synch with that system.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: And that's a...

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And so... [crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Citywide decision.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: The expectation...

[crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Right, right.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Is that you will be able to do that and so that we can move forward with your budget.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: We understand what you want and you know... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Okay.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: That's, as I said, something we'll have to discuss with OMB on, but we understand what your needs are.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Okay, thank you. I know my colleagues have questions, but... and okay. I will get back to you because Council Member Eugene

has to leave and in deference to his time, I will continue. Council Member Eugene?

COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Thank you very much, Madam Chair and thank you also for your leadership on you know, fighting for our youth and Commissioner, thank you very much for your presence and I want to take the opportunity also to thank all your staff, but I'm going to be very brief because I have to leave, unfortunately.

I'm very concerned about the Summer Program for Youth; very concerned about that. We have been through that you know, several times in the past years and I have heard and we know that everybody's talking about the benefit of the Summer Program for young people; for youth; for children. We know that the parent... and I've said that several times the parents, they have to go to work. The children, they are on vacation, but not the parents and I think that the children deserve a place to go to continue to learn and to have fun. We all know that. We have made progress in the past years, but for me, it is like we are moving backward and I was expecting to see the number increase and to make more progress. Why in the budget; in the Preliminary

Budget we don't see any funding for the summer slots for the children?

COMMISSIONER CHONG: [off mic] So... unfortunately, because of the risks that the city faced, and particularly DYCD, given the proposed cuts in the federal funding to our agency, it's something we can't afford at this point. [background noise]

COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: This is the answer, but let's put it this way: who sets the priorities for DYCD?

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Obviously, I recommend priorities, but we're part of a larger budget discussion and the city has to make some difficult choices, given the uncertainty, both with the state and the federal budget.

COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: But when we talk about priorities, we say it all the time; that the children, they are our future and we know also during the summer, there are so many distractions and negativities.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Well, let me say first of all, we still plan to serve 77,000 young people through our community centers and our elementary programs this summer on top of the 70,000

in the Summer Youth Employment Program, so it's not like there is no investment in summer programming by DYCD. It's the question of whether we can afford at this... given the uncertainties, the money you're talking about.

COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Yeah, but I know, as I said, that we made progress and I commend all of you; all of the members of the team who came together in the past years to make progress and as a matter of fact, I've got to commend all of you. We reached 70,000 summer jobs for the young people. That was remarkable; wonderful. I know there are good programs and we have made a lot of effort, but I'm talking about the 34,000 children who will be there in the summer without doing nothing. That's what I'm talking about and I think... how much money would be needed to protect those 34,000 slots?

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Well, I think it's...
[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Approximately?

COMMISSIONER CHONG: 22,000. I think it's 22,000 and I believe it's \$15 million.

COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: That's a drop in the bucket. This is nothing. I think that you know,

1 we in the city of New York, the city; the
2 administration and the City Council, we can work
3 together to bring the money back to preserve those
4 34,000 slots because those children are so important
5 for us.
6

7 And let me conclude by saying that...
8 because I've got to go and I know my colleagues have
9 questions also. At the end of your testimony, you
10 said that the Fiscal Year 2019 Preliminary Budget
11 continues to place DYCD in a very strong position to
12 fund quality programs that improve lives and create
13 opportunities to advance socioeconomically and you
14 stated we look forward to continuing to work with the
15 city council to support New York City's youth,
16 families and communities. We also on the city
17 council, we are members of this community. We would
18 love to work together with you to achieve this very
19 important goal. My question to you now: you are
20 willing to work with us and we are willing to work
21 with you. What can we do together to preserve; to
22 protect those 34,000 slots? [chime]

23 COMMISSIONER CHONG: I mean... [crosstalk]
24
25

COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: And I believe that if we work together, we can do it. The money that you just mentioned, this is nothing.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Well, this is, as I said, the Preliminary Budget; the budget process goes all the way through June 30th. Obviously, you guys will continue to negotiate with the Mayor's Office and we look forward to whatever support you can provide us.

COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: But can you support us also because you're talking about...
[crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: I mean I... you know...
[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: We are working...
[crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: I would always...
[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Together.
[crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Welcome additional funding that's added to my budget, so we continue to

1
2 appreciate the support that the council has made for
3 DYCD and the programs that we sponsor.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: And you know that
5 and we say that several times. We want to work with
6 you. We want to support DYCD. We do want that, but
7 I think that you have a certain authority to set the
8 priorities, but I would expect that in your process
9 to set the priorities that you know, the summer
10 program for the young people, the children; I mean
11 summer camp, I mean would be part of your priorities.

12 COMMISSIONER CHONG: I mean we... as I said
13 earlier, my focus is to make sure that the core
14 programs that DYCD operates are funded and you know,
15 just to give some perspective, it was only five years
16 ago, and I remember that something like 40% of our
17 budget was added at the last minute. We had half our
18 homeless youth programs depending on last minute
19 money; half our summer job programs depending on last
20 minute money; half our after-school programs. So I
21 think knowing how bad things were five years ago and
22 where we are today, that all our core programs have
23 money to operate on July the 1st.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Anyway, I am
25 going to stop here, but I want to say that I was

1 happy to see the children on the steps of City Hall
2 you know, one hour before. They were there, crying;
3 begging for summer programs for themselves. They
4 were begging, yelling and you know, trying to get
5 something positive for the summer. That was
6 remarkable and we should make sure that we do
7 everything possible to protect or preserve those
8 34,000 slots.
9

10 Thank you very much, Commissioner, for
11 your testimony, and Madam Chair, thank you so very
12 much for this opportunity. Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you, Council
14 Member Eugene. Thank you for your concern and for
15 all the work that you did previously for the Youth
16 Services Committee.

17 Commissioner, I just want to... not to
18 belabor the point, but I just want to say that 90% of
19 the program budget of the code is in one Unit of
20 Appropriation [background voices] and then you have
21 in the Community Development related programming it
22 has its own Unit of Appropriation for contract
23 spending. This is not transparency. [background
24 voices] It's not transparent and I was glad to hear
25 you say that you would go back to OMB to discuss this

so that we can get on the same page. So I appreciate your efforts in that behalf, and in previous years funding for Summer SONYC has not been restored until after the release of the Executive Budget; however, part of the ability to restore funding has been contingent on program providers having already enrolled participants and securing staff for the summer. How feasible would it be for providers to even get Summer SONYC programs off the ground for Fiscal 2019 if funds were restored in April or May or even in June?

COMMISSIONER CHONG: So right now, we have no plans to expand the funding beyond what we have, but as we've shown in the past, in the last few years, but in previous years; even under the previous administration, that the staff at DYCD are very hardworking; very nimble and then the non-profit partners are also very committed to getting services up and running as quickly as funding becomes available. So I'm confident if we get to that point, but right now, we're not there. We can move quickly. I mean I've referenced the experience from five years ago. For multiple years 40% of DYCD's budget was not finalized until the adopted budget, yet programs

1 still happened. So I think you know, we are
2 committed if funding becomes available to making sure
3 it gets into the community.
4

5 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: But aren't you setting
6 them up to fail when you do not give them enough time
7 to organize; to do; to put the systems in place that
8 they need to? Enrollment needs to start now.
9 Parents need to know now. You're setting them up for
10 failure and then they're not going to be able to
11 enroll the numbers that we would like to see them
12 enroll, and so it starts a ripple effect where now
13 they don't need that level of funding because they're
14 not meeting the enrollment criteria. It's setting up
15 a cycle of failure for these groups that have to have
16 lead time to do this and... [crosstalk]

17 COMMISSIONER CHONG: [inaudible]

18 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: So I need to know that
19 you have been fighting to make sure that it is in the
20 budget this go around and not waiting until adoption.
21 It is not feasible for these providers to provide
22 services; needed services that I don't think anybody
23 disagrees with I'm sure and I would hate to think
24 that the administration doesn't see the necessity and
25 how important this program is, but to be a party to

1
2 setting them up for failure and not being able to
3 deliver the services. Even if the administration has
4 a "Come to Jesus Moment" and decides to fund this,
5 this needs to be decided at this juncture. I want to
6 know what measures you're taking to ensure that this
7 is going to be a discussion because I didn't see
8 anywhere where there was a request for any type of
9 funding for Summer SONYC... [crosstalk]

10 COMMISSIONER CHONG: Respectfully...

11 [crosstalk]

12 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Coming from your
13 agency.

14 COMMISSIONER CHONG: Respectfully, I
15 disagree with your characterization... [crosstalk]

16 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Mm-hm.

17 COMMISSIONER CHONG: Of setting up to
18 failure because the proof is in the pudding that when
19 funding comes in at the last minute, we have gotten
20 it done. Our partners will get it done; our staff
21 will get it done. As you know for many years...
22 [crosstalk]

23 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Your staff gets it
24 done, but the providers are not... [crosstalk]

25 COMMISSIONER CHONG: Well... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Able to deliver the services and they're not able to get the necessary... [crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Well... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Enrollment that they need to have.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: We've managed to get young people... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: To meet... [crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Enrolled... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: The need.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: So could I respond?

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Sure.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Okay, respectfully, young people have been enrolled. To give the best example is the Summer Youth Employment Program. There were years not too long ago where we would get half the funding two weeks before the start of summer and the program happened, so I'm confident that the same thing can happen if money comes in very late and I think it's something I wanted to share with the other committee members; that the way the Summer SONYC Program operates, it's not an eight week

1
2 program. It's 108 hours over four weeks, so what's
3 happened in the past if money comes in late, programs
4 start later and they could run into August, so I am
5 confident that given... if the funding becomes
6 available, given the commitment of the staff, of the
7 CBOs and of DYCD, services will be delivered.

8 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: I understand that and
9 I appreciate that you know, there's that latitude;
10 however, parents need to know now. They're making
11 plans for the summer now. They cannot wait until
12 then and then for the provider to say, "Well, we are
13 going to provide services in August as opposed to
14 July." They need to know now and you know, that's
15 the point.

16 COMMISSIONER CHONG: Ideally, I agree
17 with more times it's better, but I think to say we're
18 setting people up for failure is probably an over-
19 exaggeration. I think we can get it done.

20 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Council Member Jumaane
21 Williams?

22 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you,
23 Madam Chair. Thank you, Commissioner. So I do have
24 to say the most frustrating line for me was "I'm
25 happy with what I have." In the eight years... nine...

going on nine years, you're probably the only commissioner I've ever heard say that and it seems to be some sort of language like that that's used every single year and so for the life of me, I cannot understand how a commissioner would come before the City Council year after year and not ask for additional funding. On top of that, every year you give a synopsis of what's happening and so you talked about the great work that's been done; the budget's been increased; the Summer Youth jobs; the SONYC and then you say you're happy with what you have. You said something similar last year. How could you be happy with what you have both years or at least three years running? And they've increased only because we forced it to increase. So can you reconcile you coming here every year, not asking for additional funding, saying you are okay with what you have? But then the next year when we force it down DYCD's throat, you then say you're happy with what have.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: If I can say, the largest increase in our budget were two things that the administration recommended and implemented. One was the SONYC expansion, which more than... I think our after-school program now is what, 200... \$400 million,

Amish [phonetic]? Yeah, so the biggest increase was actually not by the Council, but by the administration and the second biggest increase was... well, not second, but one of the other largest increases was the Beacon program, so I kind of disagree with that the increases were... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Well, let me rephrase... [crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Themselves... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: The question.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Well, can I... can I... can I... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: No, it's... no, no, I'll rephrase it. How can you not ask for any money last year, get additional money, even if it was from the administration; and I'll look at the numbers, and then come back and say you're happy with what you have? You can't be happy with what you have one year and not ask for additional money. Then get additional money, be happy again... [crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: We're... we're focused... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Then get additional money and be happy again.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: But it allays the facts that the growth has been... in the budget has been initiated by the administration; after-school, Homeless Youth, the Beacon program. Those were all initiated by the administration, so I am very happy with those changes. I went... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Well... [crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Through... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: I want to go... [crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: [**inaudible**] [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Back because if you say the administration, which I'm giving you for this argument, we have had to push the administration on many of these.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: There's been a dialogue, but... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: We have had to push... [crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: But the... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: The
administration.

[interposing]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: But the biggest
increase... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: What my
question is is still this: it's not the commissioner
asking for these things and I just don't understand
that.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: The biggest increase
in our budget was after-school.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Did you get
[inaudible] Was that... [crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Because the Mayor
pushed it.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: That's what I'm
saying. Like...

[interposing]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: But I'm saying
that's the administration. I work for this
administration. We work hand in hand.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Commissioner,
all of the... [crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: With their...

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Commissioners
work for the administration.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Right.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: You are the
only one that doesn't ask for anything and I just
asked you if you pushed for it and you said the Mayor
pushed for it. I... just I... is it... is it... isn't it
part of your job to ask... [crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: It... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: For additional...

[crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: So to give you an
example, the Beacon expansion was something I asked
for and I got it. So you know, it's... when...

[interposing]

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Okay.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: When the budget
doubles in four years, it's hard to say that there's
been no action by this administration.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: I didn't say...
I'm talking about the Commissioner... [crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Well... [crosstalk]

1 COMMITTEE ON YOUTH SERVICES 55

2 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Of DYCD...

3 [crosstalk]

4 COMMISSIONER CHONG: But... [crosstalk]

5 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Who every year
6 comes here... [crosstalk]

7 COMMISSIONER CHONG: A lot of this is
8 back and forth... [crosstalk]

9 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: And doesn't...
10 [crosstalk]

11 COMMISSIONER CHONG: With the Mayor's
12 Office... [crosstalk]

13 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Ask for
14 additional... [crosstalk]

15 COMMISSIONER CHONG: And OMB.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Funds and...
17 [crosstalk]

18 COMMISSIONER CHONG: And... and so...
19 [crosstalk]

20 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Says...
21 [crosstalk]

22 COMMISSIONER CHONG: It's for you...
23 [crosstalk]

24 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Your quote... I'm
25 repeating what you... [crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Said. You
said... [crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: "I'm happy..."
[crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: But... but...
[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: "With what I
have." So what I want... [crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Yes, I am.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: What I would...
what I would probably figure is going to happen is
there will be additional funding that will go into
programs we care about and then next year, you will
say the same thing. That's a frustrating thing
because the dialogue should be between us, the
commissioner; have a conversation and figure out what
it is, but there seems to be no part where the
commissioner is saying what is needed for the agency
and for the young people... [crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Uh-huh.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: In the city of
New York.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Uh-huh. I think the dialogue should be between the Council and the Mayor's Office of Budget because they have to look at the larger picture of challenges facing the city.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Dude, I mean I don't even know what to say to that. I... I... wow! [background noise] Like I'm astonished by what you're saying right now on the record. So what is the role of the commissioner?

COMMISSIONER CHONG: I think it's to really identify needs. We pass them onto the Budget's Office and then in the back and forth as they begin to plan what the city can afford and then we're going to execute the programs that are funded.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: So your primary job is the execution.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Well, I work with the Office of Management and Budget. I gave you the example of the Beacon expansion. That's something that we initiated.

[interposing]

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Alright.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: And you know, they were able to fund it.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: At some point
3 my hope is that the administration will prep you
4 better for these answers because they're... these are
5 wild answers you're giving for a commissioner of an
6 agency of such importance. I just... I've got to say
7 that. I didn't expect this to be the result of the
8 questioning, but...

9 [interposing]

10 COMMISSIONER CHONG: I think the results
11 speak for themselves. The fact that the budget has
12 doubled... [crosstalk]

13 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: And pat the
14 council on the back for that. So, but let me try to
15 focus on what I wanted to focus on, which was Summer
16 Youth Employment. I'm sorry, I... I... I was really
17 thrown off unexpectedly. So I support all of these
18 programs, of course, the camp jobs that folks are
19 trying to get back. Something that's been very dear
20 to me is the Summer Youth Program that we've gone
21 from FY 14 from 36,000. We're now up to about
22 70,000. There has been general agreement that if we
23 can get to a universal Youth Employment, we'd like
24 to, so I'm trying to see what the DYCD has done in
25 preparation to try to get there. It's been baselined

1 now at 70,000. General agreement between advocates,
2 whom I thank very much, particularly CSS and I see
3 Andy Bowman here, who did a lot of work on this as
4 well and others, is that 100,000 jobs would fall into
5 the purposes of being universal. I know the Council;
6 many members of the Council; I know the Chair and
7 others do still view this as one of the priorities.
8 What has the department done to try to prepare to get
9 to that?
10

11 COMMISSIONER CHONG: So at this point
12 we're piloting some of the recommendations from the
13 council mayoral work group of a year ago and so this
14 year we're adding 5,000 jobs set aside for school-
15 based programs and so we're not there at 100,000 yet.
16 I'm sure that will come up in the negotiations
17 between the administration and the Council. If we
18 get there, we're prepared to scale up. We're going
19 to issue a request proposal this fall, which will
20 hopefully bring on new providers. The original
21 network of 100 and some odd programs isn't enough to
22 really meet the demand of new jobs. So we're ready.
23 It's a process that I'm sure will be playing out over
24 the next few months.
25

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Yeah, I do want to just clarify. You said adding on 5,000, so are you adding onto 75,000 or that's included in the 70?

COMMISSIONER CHONG: It's included in the 70.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Okay, so are we planning to add any additional?

COMMISSIONER CHONG: I think that's something I'm sure will come up in the budget negotiations and we're prepared to scale up if additional money becomes available.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: So because the question that's always brought up is capacity, so what's being done to make sure the capacity is there?

COMMISSIONER CHONG: So the plan is to issue a request for proposal this fall, which we hope to add more programs, as well as you may have seen in the concept paper we issued last year, different strategies to better serve young people because we know that one size does not fit all; that young people... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: So...

[interposing]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: So [inaudible]

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: That's in the fall.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: In the fall.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: But we have to put the money in now for the budget.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: We can scale up based on whatever money becomes available.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: So if we... so the number to get to 100,000 is \$63.8 million. That will get us the full [background noise] 100,000 on top of the 120 [inaudible]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: If we get there, we'll make it work.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: So just for clarity, if you got an additional 130,000 in jobs at \$63.8 million, you can make it work before the RFP comes out?

COMMISSIONER CHONG: We'll make it work.

I mean a few years ago we had 20,000 jobs. In the last two weeks the non-profit community stepped up, so whatever the amount of money becomes available, we

will works with our non-profit partners to make it happen.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: So one of the reasons I stopped pushing last year, and I do think also of the then Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito and [inaudible] Julissa Ferreras-Copeland, is that the advocates actually did say they would have trouble filling additional spots and that mirrored something that the administration sometimes would say capacity.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Uh-huh.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: But it sounds like you're saying now...

[interposing]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Well, without a number it's hard for me to say, but whatever the number is, we'll figure out a way to get it done.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: I mean because I'm giving a number. You know what I'm saying?

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: If we get a...

[crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: I have to you know, look at it and see whether you know... what can be done with additional money, but as I said, the track

record has been when money gets added, we can get it done. We have a long-term plan, which is the request for proposal, which will be coming out this fall, which will increase our capacity much more in the long-term.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: So from last budget negotiations to this, what has the department done to increase capacity to get to 100,000?

COMMISSIONER CHONG: We can't add new programs without an RFP, so we just add additional jobs to each program.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: So nothing basically is what's happening from... [crosstalk]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Well, but that's been the case for seven years or six years.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Okay.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: So...

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Sounds like...
[background noise]

COUNSEL: Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth in your testimony before this [background noise] and to respond honestly to council member's questions?

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER WHITE: I do.

COUNSEL: State your name for the record, please.

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER WHITE: Andre White, Associate Commissioner of Youth Workforce Development Programs.

So yes, Jumaane, we do recognize that there has been a capacity issue, right? As a part of the task force, which we were all a part of that convening last year, we implemented a number of changes to make sure to provide that resource as necessary to scale up if we do get late funding. One of things that we have done, we've released the work site application earlier. So typically that application would have gone out in March. It's now being released in January. What does that simply mean? It means that providers have adequate time to develop as many jobs as possible.

The second thing that we have done, we have also released the participant application earlier, right? So the application was released on February 5th. The deadline's going to be March 30th. What does that mean? The providers have more time to run lotteries, to do assessment and everything is spread across three months, as opposed to being in

two months. So with time, providers are able to do more. So we moved the timeline a lot to make sure that providers are able to do what they need to on the ground.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you.

Would the department and advocates be able to handle if we actually got the 30,000 additional job slots?

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER WHITE: Capacity is definitely an issue. I won't say it's not. As the commissioner mentioned, the providers are always committed to making sure that we provide meaningful summer job experiences to young people. As the commissioner mentioned, it depends on what number is. Myself, I was the SYEP director for many years, so I know exactly what it takes to run a quality program and I see that providers are a little bit stretched, but that doesn't mean that with additional [inaudible] support that they can increase the number of jobs.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Okay, so I think the plan... we were trying to see if we can gradually step up and get to 100,000, the sooner the better, and my hope is that it will become a priority again during budget negotiations, so my hope is that

1 happens, even if it's increased... I mean hopefully we
2 can get to 100,000, even if it's more the commitment...
3 sometimes we make commitments, a multi [inaudible]
4 commitment and we drop it and as I had mentioned
5 before, when it comes to violence, the number one
6 thing that cuts violent crimes in half is a job and
7 so I think it's very important that we continue to
8 push this. I think all these programs are a part of
9 the partnership with the NYPD and others that have
10 helped get us to where we are and I want to make sure
11 that continues to grow.

12
13 So I have one last question. Can a young
14 person's income from SYEP count against their
15 family's eligibility for benefits like SNAP?

16 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER WHITE: This is a
17 very complicated issue, right? And we've been
18 working with HRA and the Mayor's office to talk to
19 folks on the state level to actually change the
20 legislation. It can have an impact; however, what we
21 do recommend to young people and what DYCD has done
22 over the years, once a young person is notified that
23 their benefits you know, impact it, my staff and
24 myself, we present a letter to the young person so
25 they can take it to HRA so they can show that they're

1
2 a part of summer job program and not an extension of
3 like a larger long-term program, which means that
4 they'll be getting more money, right? So it's really
5 for our [inaudible] so yeah, it can, but we try our
6 very best to make sure from our end that we provide
7 the letter that they could take to HRA to make sure
8 that they are aware of what programs they are a part
9 of. [background noise]

10 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: So the
11 brilliant minds over here have found out that Alaska
12 and some other states have been designed so it
13 doesn't penalize the young people, so hopefully we
14 can reach out to some of those states. It does sound
15 like you're reaching... you're talking to the state
16 now.

17 ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER WHITE: We are
18 talking to the state now, correct, yes.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: My
20 understanding is that at least on the staff level,
21 those conversations go a little bit smoother, so my
22 hope is that it will go smoothly here. Thank you for
23 answering my questions. Commissioner, I don't expect
24 you to know the minutia of every program. I'm glad
25

the Deputy Commissioner was here to answer my questions.

I do expect a lot more... I don't know if vision is the right word; a lot more push; a lot more ask from a commissioner. I'm astonished that you feel that you don't need to be in these conversations and it needs to be just the Council and the Mayor. My hope is that you will rethink what your role is as a commissioner of DYCD. There are a lot of young people who are counting on the decisions that we're all making here, so thank you for that. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you, Council Member Williams. And now we'll have questions from Council Member Chin.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: You're welcome.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Commissioner, you know, I've been on this committee since I started in the City Council, so this is my ninth year, right? And I remember the first four years. It was tough. I mean under the prior administration it was about cut, cut, cut and all we can do is fight to restore

1 what was taken away and there was never any
2 opportunity to even talk about new program,
3 expansions, so you know, I see the improvement in
4 this last four years. We were excited about all the
5 new programs that got more money and you know, the
6 Beacon program; of course, you know, SYEP,
7 unprecedented number of summer youth jobs and then
8 the Universal Middle School after-school program. I
9 mean it's a signature piece from the Mayor and that
10 is why I just can't understand why that the summer
11 component of the SONYC program or the Universal
12 Middle School after-school program do not have a
13 summer component funded. It doesn't make any sense
14 to me. It needs to be a year-round program,
15 including the summer. When I was a summer school
16 after-school teacher when I graduated from college
17 many, many years ago, you were hired to work all year
18 round because the summer component is part of the
19 program. So... and when our Mayor talked about income
20 inequality, he's not helping the low-income family,
21 okay? Because the summer component is not there and
22 every year the parents worry. Middle school kids are
23 the most vulnerable. I mean like you don't want them
24 hanging out in the street and we all know that and we
25

1 all know the benefit of the program. The after-
2 school program has been so successful and we don't
3 want them to be left alone in the summer, but for a
4 lot of parents that are low-income; they have to
5 work, they don't have the money to send their kids to
6 camp or to specialized program, but yeah, I mean some
7 other parents; middle-income parents, they have the
8 option, but for a lot of low-income parents,
9 immigrant parents, they don't have the option and
10 then today at a rally one of the providers were
11 telling us a survey that they did with the kids and a
12 lot of kids you know, they're going to end up staying
13 home or they don't know what to do and that's not
14 what we want for them. So I hope that you will work
15 with us to make sure the Mayor gets it! I just don't
16 understand why he doesn't see the summer component as
17 a core program as part of the middle school after-
18 school program that he has been so good on, alright?
19 So we are going to work very hard to make sure it's
20 included, but when you answered Council Member
21 Williams' question earlier about your priority is
22 making sure core programs funded are running great,
23 that summer component should be in the core program
24 because I don't want to waste time fighting for that
25

1 because I want to get something else. The COMPASS
2 program... I want to get to Universal after-school
3 program for every single kid in our public school,
4 alright? We're not there yet and these are the
5 elementary school kids. We don't want any more of
6 the latch key kids. I mean there are times when kids
7 have no choice. They're home by themselves; for a
8 lot of immigrant kids. You know the stories. We're
9 not even there yet, right? We're pushing for a
10 universal summer job and we're getting there. We're
11 getting there. We got to work on SONYC and the
12 summer component of the COMPASS has got to be
13 expanded and make sure it's all together and we got
14 to make sure that's also a universal program, and on
15 top of that, I mean this is what we need DYCD to work
16 with us in terms of new needs; in terms of what we
17 should be striving for. Mayor's introducing
18 Universal Pre-K! Hey, those Pre-K kids also need
19 after-school program and summer program. K-3? They
20 also need that too. So those are the programs that
21 we have to work towards. The Mayor is starting
22 wonderful program: Universal after-school for middle
23 school kids, great, and left out the summer
24 component, alright? So these are the new needs or
25

1
2 projected needs that I think DYCD should work with us
3 and you set up a taskforce you know, with us on the
4 summer youth jobs and we got great information that
5 could help really improve that program, but these are
6 the programs that at DYCD should also be working on.
7 The BEACON program is great. Cornerstone program is
8 great. We need more support for that, right?

9 Because having kids have a place to go at night, and
10 we know the result. We know a lot of good things are
11 happening and you're part of that, Commissioner, but
12 we also want to have more good programs coming in the
13 pipeline. So you got a lot of work and a lot of
14 things to fight for, but that's what I think we want
15 to hear from you is that part. You're happy your
16 budget has doubled and we are very happy your budget
17 has doubled. I remember the Bloomberg days when I
18 used to tell the commissioner, "You know, I think you
19 should be the city council's commissioner," because
20 most of the funding was city council money, right?

21 So we have made a great stride, but we want to hear
22 from you and your staff. The vision of getting to
23 you know, Universal COMPASS program, Universal after-
24 school program for every single kid in our school
25 year round. That's what we want to hear from you.

1 So I think the frustration from my colleagues... I mean
2 I know you want to make sure that the programs that
3 you got funding for runs and there's a lot of great
4 things that's been happening, but hey, man, ask for
5 more. Do more! You know what I mean? And that's
6 why we're here, right? We have Chair Rose and all of
7 us; we're supportive. You know, we're willing to
8 work with you, but we need to hear those visions, so
9 look, the summer program, it better be in the
10 Executive Budget; the summer component because I am
11 telling the Mayor he should not mess with this
12 because otherwise we're going to take the Universal
13 Middle School credit back. We're not going to give
14 him the credit for that. I mean come on, it just... it
15 doesn't make sense to us and you're looking at jobs I
16 mean for the providers; the people, the director, the
17 teachers. It's a year-round job. It's not a job
18 just without the summer. They have to work in the
19 summer. That's part of the job. So we got to make
20 sure that... and you're taking this... and the Mayor just
21 taking his little part to do the budget dance. Hey,
22 we don't do budget dance anymore. So why... why are
23 you taking that little out and you're saying that
24 federal cuts... this is such a little pot of money. It
25

1 doesn't make sense, alright? We want more. Let's
2 talk about the regular kids in the elementary school.
3 We want a summer program and after-school program for
4 every single one of them because that will also help
5 them improve academically in the school. We're
6 making... we're making progress. So we got to do that,
7 alright, Commissioner?

8
9 COMMISSIONER CHONG: So...

10 [interposing]

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: You got to give us
12 those... [crosstalk]

13 COMMISSIONER CHONG: I appreciate your...

14 [crosstalk]

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: [**inaudible**] and
16 ideas. [crosstalk]

17 COMMISSIONER CHONG: Enthusiasm,
18 Margaret. We've known each other many, many years
19 and so we appreciate the support. I mean I just want
20 to make it clear again for the record that we do have
21 summer services happening. There are 77,000 young
22 people that will be served this summer in elementary
23 or middle school through the community centers. We
24 expanded hours at all of the community centers
25 through the evening, so it's not a situation where

there are no services in the summer. We're talking about... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: I did not say there was no services.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: I know.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: We know that, but still, one kid not getting a program is unacceptable, okay? So we got to make sure that all the kids who are in the after-school program; that they should be able to continue with their summer program.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: I hear you. The fact that it's not in the budget doesn't mean the program doesn't have value or merit. It's a question of what the city can afford at this juncture.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: An \$88 billion budget and you're telling me we couldn't afford \$20 million for the summer? It just should be based on... it should be part of the after-school program. That's it. I'm sick and tired of fighting for this every year. It's not right. It was in the proposal, right? When the Mayor started the first year of the Universal after-school Middle School Program, the summer component was there, right?

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Actually it wasn't. In the RFP and in the concept paper it was a school-based program. In fact, the big difference in the SONYC program was that in the school year instead of nine hours, it went to 15 hours, so the emphasis from the very beginning in the design of the SONYC program was to have a more robust school year model.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: That's school year, but what are you going to do with the kids when they're out of school? Everyone knows that at that age they're vulnerable you know, to get in trouble. Every expert; every provider can tell you that, right? So if you want to build on the success that they get during the school year, you can't leave them out during the summer.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Look, I don't think we disagree on the merits of the services. It's a question of what the city can afford and that's really the discussion because the fact that we believe that there's a need for summer services is why we're serving 77,000 young people this summer. There's a question of what we can afford.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: I don't think it's what... it's the question of what we can afford, okay?

1
2 I think the question is really we truly believe that
3 our kids are a priority. I mean that should be part
4 of the program. It just doesn't make sense to me
5 that it's not a year-round program, when it has
6 proven you know, to be so successful and so we need
7 to work towards... [crosstalk]

8 COMMISSIONER CHONG: Yes, okay.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Besides that, we
10 also need to work towards for our elementary school
11 kids because I have students in my district who
12 cannot... who are... who don't have after-school programs
13 and in order to get one... they can't get one from the
14 city; a free one. They have to pay and for working
15 families and low-income family; immigrant family
16 \$20.00 a day is a lot of money. So... and we're still
17 not even taking care of those kids. So I want to
18 work towards Universal after-school programs for
19 every kid, especially you know, in our elementary
20 schools too. So there's a lot more that we have to
21 fight for, Chair, right? We're going... we're going to
22 have to continue to do that.

23 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you, Council
24 Member Chin. Thank you. I don't know how else or
25 what else anyone here on this committee could say

1 about the importance of it, but the administration
2 saw that it was important. There was a critical need
3 and they baselined it one year and then to take it
4 back. You know, that means that there was value;
5 that they had... they saw that it was worth baselining
6 and then to take it back, not baseline it and to then
7 not even want to fund it is not something that is
8 even fathomable and I know that you understand the
9 value of this program, and what is difficult for the
10 council members to understand is that there is not
11 any push coming from you; from the department to say
12 to the administration, "This needs to be funded," and
13 Council Member Chin is absolutely right. In this
14 administration we have touted the fact that we don't
15 have to do the budget dance anymore and here we are
16 dancing. You know, we now have a commissioner for
17 cabarets because there is a place where people go to
18 dance and it's not supposed to be here at city
19 council for the budget and it's really... it's
20 frightening that our agency head is not being more
21 forceful with the administration in terms of the need
22 for summer SONYC and for this programming. We've
23 made great, great strides. We have diminished the
24 drop-out rate. The graduation rates are up. Crime

1 rates are down and to now say to a very vulnerable
2 population that we don't have enough money. There is
3 money for whatever this administration thinks is
4 important and what we are saying today is we want you
5 to take the message back that this has to be
6 important because they have found money for new
7 programs. This is a tried and true program and so we
8 want you to take this message back that it has to be
9 in the budget. We don't want to wait. We don't want
10 to wait with the maybe and the possibility. We want
11 you to carry this message that this has to be a
12 priority and it should be a priority for DYCD.

14 COMMISSIONER CHONG: So [off mic] we hear
15 you loud and clear. I think this has been something
16 we're aware of, but I do want to say that again,
17 let's remember that this administration's probably
18 the most committed to young people in history. I
19 mean I think we kind of get lost in the trees and
20 forget the forest here; that given the huge
21 commitment this administration has made... [crosstalk]

22 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Commissioner, do you
23 know that we've done a lot for NYPD? We increased
24 their head count. We got them bulletproof vests. We
25 got them body cameras and every year the commissioner

1 still comes back and says, "We need x, y and z."

2 That is not a palatable argument. It is not. You
3 are supposed to be the voice for the youth in this
4 city. We need you to say to the Mayor when he asks
5 about what your budget priorities and concerns are to
6 say that these are the concerns and that no, we don't
7 want anything eliminated. That's your job and we
8 want you to do that.

10 COMMISSIONER CHONG: And we do do it and
11 the fact is our budget has doubled. I mean I think
12 it's a little disingenuous to simply say that I'm not
13 advocating for the agency when the budget has
14 doubled; when most of the growth in the
15 administration has been in after-school, something
16 the administration added. Runaway and Homeless,
17 something the administration added. BEACONS,
18 something the administration added. Where we worked
19 closely together was the Summer Youth Employment
20 Program. So I think it's important that the facts do
21 matter. I understand the passion that people have
22 about this particular program and you know, I think
23 the Mayor hears it as well and it's something I will
24 pass on. Again, I'm sure he's aware of it and we'll
25 see where this process goes.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And I want to commend you on the record that yes, there has been growth in DYCD's budget. Yes, we have increased funding to youth programming. We acknowledge that and no one is trying to downplay that, but you are now talking about apples and oranges. We acknowledge that and we are thankful for your advocacy in that area, but what we're talking about now is a program that exists [background noise] and was baselined at one point; that we want that program funded and we don't want that to... and we want it to be a priority for you. Council Member Cumbo?

COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you, Chair Rose. It has been said by all of our colleagues, and we stand united on this particular issue. We all believe that it is wrong to balance our city's budget on the most vulnerable, our middle school students; young people that can't vote; young people that don't have a voice at the same level as many of us, and the fact that they were here today; hundreds of them, to say that they want a summer experience and that they want to continue that program, we can't in good consciousness as elected leaders allow them to go unprotected and to be vulnerable during the summer

1 months. All of the programs that we're touting are
2 very holistic and organic in that each of their
3 success depends on the other and if we allow 34,000
4 young people to not have a summer experience, we
5 don't know what's going to happen in the way of gang
6 activity; sex activity; teenage pregnancy; gun
7 violence. These are all the issues that we've made
8 so much progress in.

9 I wanted to first start off by asking
10 through the SONYC program during the summer are young
11 people provided meals for breakfast, as well as
12 lunch?
13

14 COMMISSIONER CHONG: Let me have Susan
15 Haskell, our deputy commissioner come talk about...
16 [crosstalk]

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Because I think
18 it's important to understand what we're... [crosstalk]

19 COMMISSIONER CHONG: Right.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Unraveling here.

21 COMMISSIONER CHONG: Yeah, because we
22 already serve 77,000 young people through our after-
23 school program, so she can talk a little bit more
24 about what kind of activities those young people will
25 be getting.

COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I'm talking about through... I'm asking specifically about the SONYC program.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: She can talk about all of it, including the SONYC.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HASKELL: I might have to get... [crosstalk]

COUNSEL: Would you please raise your right... [crosstalk]

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HASKELL: Back... [crosstalk]

COUNSEL: Mm... sorry. Would you please... yes, do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth in your testimony before this committee and to respond honestly to council members questions?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HASKELL: Yes, I do.

COUNSEL: Please state your name for the record.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HASKELL: Susan Haskell, Deputy Commissioner, Youth Services. To your question about food, I know the city makes great efforts in every spring leading up to the summertime to make sure that free meals are available to

1 children in schools and we certainly use our broad
2 reach in the community to publicize those. Whether
3 you're involved in one of DYCD funded programs or
4 not, you can come to schools and get food. Our SONYC
5 programs, like the Commissioner outlined, they're
6 not... in the elementary programs, a young person is
7 going to get a meal. In a SONYC program, they
8 operate in very different ways. We give them
9 flexibility; 108 hours over a minimum of four weeks.
10 So depending on what model you're doing with the
11 young people, you could stretch that out longer. You
12 could do it in the four week period. They may or may
13 not be with the provider during mealtime, depending
14 on how they choose to spread it out, but we make sure
15 to work in partnership with school food; that young
16 people know that they can get food at schools and
17 other locations throughout the city.

18
19 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: So you would be
20 prepared for 34,000 young people that were
21 traditionally in this program to go to alternative
22 places for food?

23 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HASKELL: I would
24 like to get back on the details of that, but I'm
25 inclined to say yes, based on each year the efforts

1
2 that we go to to promote those meals with school food
3 to young people. I'll have to check on what their
4 actual capacity is, but I'm inclined based on those
5 efforts to say absolutely.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: So young people
7 would go to a school and be able to eat and then
8 leave?

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HASKELL: Yes and we
10 do at Parks and Recreation facilities and other
11 public access points. I would like to get back to
12 you on the details of that.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Because I'm very
14 concerned that we're talking about 34,000 young
15 people and their ability to have security, safety,
16 food, all of these different elements. For us, I'm
17 just... the way the Commissioner is talking about it
18 and the way that you're discussing is that if money
19 should happen to be found, we can ramp up quick
20 enough in order to be able to still provide the
21 services, but we don't just want this to be a program
22 that is okay. We want it to be an amazing program
23 for the summer and amazing programs take an
24 incredible amount of planning. We want this to be a
25 memorable summer for our young people. We want them

1 to be able to know consistently how they're going to
2 travel there, that they're going to have a meal for
3 breakfast and lunch. It takes time to plan trips and
4 field trips and activities and all these different
5 sorts of things. All of these things take an
6 incredible and an enormous amount of time and we are
7 here every year to fight for this particular program
8 and this takes valuable time away from us to fight
9 for our constituents who are having mold issues; that
10 have been having heat issues; that are having
11 eviction issues; that are concerned about any number
12 of issues in terms of transportation. There are so
13 many issues that we have to address as elected
14 officials. We shouldn't have to be addressing where
15 our middle school students are going to be for the
16 summer. This takes valuable time away from our
17 offices; from our staff; from each of the elected
18 officials and it really prevents growth as a
19 community because we're fighting for basic services
20 that we shouldn't have to debate about, discuss and
21 we all attended Mayor de Blasio's State of the City,
22 where we talked about this being the fairest city in
23 New York, and we're not seeing that translate when it
24 comes to our youth. There have been incredible
25

1 amounts of strides made as it pertains to our youth,
2 but to let 34,000 go without a structured program,
3 and I don't mean a drop-in program because a drop-in
4 program is a drop-in program. You can't quite
5 adequately prepare for a drop-in program the way you
6 do for a structured program. And so this has to be
7 addressed this month and I think we're all baffled as
8 to why this is not a passionate issue that everyone
9 behind your table is not fighting for and saying,
10 "Hands off, we draw the line in the sand here. This
11 program absolutely cannot be cut." Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you, Council
14 Member Cumbo. Commissioner, we'd like to ask you
15 some questions about Runaway and Homeless Youth. We
16 have a lot of people who want to testify and I hope
17 that you'll be able to stay to hear from our
18 advocates and our public. But in terms of our
19 Runaway and Homeless Youth, the current budget
20 supports 653 beds. Traditionally the primary
21 challenge has been getting beds online and finding
22 providers with adequate capacity, finding suitable
23 space and getting space certified by the state's
24 Office of Child and Family Services. What makes DYCD
25 confident that you can make all of the currently

1
2 scheduled beds, including those to be added in the
3 coming fiscal year, available by the end of Fiscal
4 Year 2019?

5 COMMISSIONER CHONG: Let me start and
6 then maybe Sue can... Susan can add as well. I think
7 in my testimony I said that we expect to add another
8 95 or 96 beds by the end of this fiscal year. That
9 means these are beds that have been funded and just
10 waiting for the final sign off either by the state or
11 buildings or fire department, so we'll probably be...
12 [crosstalk]

13 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And what number is
14 that?

15 COMMISSIONER CHONG: 95 or 96.

16 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: 95?

17 COMMISSIONER CHONG: 96 this fiscal year
18 by June 30th.

19 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Mm-hm.

20 COMMISSIONER CHONG: The money for the
21 additional 100 beds kicks in July 1st of this year
22 for Fiscal 19. We already expect to make awards in
23 the next month or two. Have they been... next month?
24 Yes, in the next month the awards for the money that
25 we don't have yet will be made in the next month or

so, so then those providers for the additional 100 beds that kick in on July 1st will have a full year to do the certification and all the other things that are required. It gives them a full year to get up and running, so I'm confident by the end of Fiscal 19, June 30th of 2019 753 beds will be funded and certified.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Okay and this past fall, you released a request for a proposal to identify service providers for pre-existing RHY beds.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Right, right.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And so you had supported in the prior administration, right?

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Right.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Supported prior to the administration's current expansion process. DYCD also released an RFP for drop-in and street outreach program providers. Have you announced these awardees yet...

[interposing]

COMMISSIONER CHONG: No, I think...

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And are there any new providers who have not previously been involved in RHY?

COMMISSIONER CHONG: I don't think the decisions... the announcements can be made for another month or so because I think they're going through the procurement process and they're being vetted, so I can't give you any details, but there will be no disruption in services. You know, this is an area; particularly residential services, not many people want to do this service. I mean when Susan and started it at DYCD in 2005 and 6, you could count on one hand the number of non-profits that'd be willing to do this. It's challenging work, working with a highly vulnerable population. We managed to double to two hands and now we're at I think three hands where we're able to bring in new providers and we're constantly looking for people to apply because we know this is important work that needs to be done, but you can't do it if you don't have people willing to do the service. So we can share with you the announcements when it's made in about a month or so, but at this point there's nothing more I can share.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Yeah, in the Preliminary Mayor's Management Report, the performance; much of the performance around RHY is measured in terms of the ability to transfer children from crisis shelters into what the document describes as suitable environments. You know, for the sake of PMMR, how does DYCD define a suitable environment?

COMMISSIONER CHONG: So Susan will answer this question.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HASKELL: We appreciate that there's been more attention to the MMR lately, especially from our advocates at the Coalition for Homeless Youth and we're looking more closely about these measures. Traditionally this measure's been in place since 2002, where we had a much smaller subset of beds, and as we've grown I do think it's appropriate that we're looking at this fresh. What we've basically noted as a suitable environment is that you know, from a provider perspective of I'm operating a crisis shelter or I'm operating a TIL, my job is to provide that young person with the supports they need in like the major life skill areas and transition them to the next step, whatever is in the best interests of that young

1 person. So we have incorporated in that measure of
2 suitable environment virtually all placements that
3 are made with a young person and the young people who
4 aren't included in that measure is a young person who
5 walks away without a placement; without a next step.
6 So it's really demonstrating the difference between a
7 young person who's been handed off to the next safe
8 location versus young people, who, as they often do;
9 remember, they're 18, 19, 20 year olds who just leave
10 and the provider hasn't been able to successfully
11 move them to the spot if they don't come back. So
12 the measure, it's a percentage of young people who
13 have been moved to the next location. We've also
14 invited advocates to advise us on how they would like
15 to look at that measure fresh and we're open to those
16 suggestions.
17

18 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Is one of the
19 measures... is a criminal justice placement considered
20 a suitable environment...

21 [interposing]

22 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HASKELL: I looked...

23 [crosstalk]

24 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: In your metric?
25

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HASKELL: I looked at the data. We do have very few, but we have a small handful of young people who went to incarceration; very small. I think we had one person in the last fiscal year, and it was grouped in the suitable environment and I can certainly see why advocates would say, "Is that really representing a suitable environment?" Again, the way we framed it was that a young person you know, moved onto a known location that was appropriate. Obviously, that's not our goal and we're open to modifying that measure.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: I was going to say are you moving to reevaluate the metrics that you are using to define the suitable environment and will that be eliminated from that sort of cohort of...
[crosstalk]

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HASKELL: Yeah...
[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Of suitable...
[crosstalk]

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HASKELL: We absolutely... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Environments?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HASKELL: Are and just keeping in mind that we wanted to recognize that young people have so many different trajectories and we want to value the work of the provider that some things may be beyond be beyond their control and not to penalize them when that's a situation that happens because very often the young person would come back after detention and continue to get services, that kind of situation, so our intent was to show that the provider work was being... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Yeah, I... [crosstalk]

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HASKELL: Done, but we can improve it.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Mm-hm. I think it's wonderful that we want you know to encourage our providers to continue to provide care and not to penalize them for situations outside of their control. However, to ever consider a criminal justice placement as a suitable environment is... it just defies you know, logic for me and so I'm glad to hear that you're willing to revisit the metrics that you are using and that that will not be considered a suitable environment. Am I correct in saying that?

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HASKELL: We're definitely going to take recommendations and we want to improve it, so thank you. We appreciate that.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Alright and we will follow up.

[interposing]

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER HASKELL: Please do.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And we'll be watching the PPMR. Okay, [background noise] and... yes. [background voice] Okay, Council Member Chin.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Yes, I just want to have a follow up question on the Homeless and Runaway Youth beds. I mean from the last hearing as we were talking to some of the providers... because from your testimony from DYCD you said that you don't have a waiting list, right? There is always a bed available, but then when I was talking to some of the young people and the providers, is there a specific shelter that targets a special population; let's say the LGBTQ youth? Those are the programs that do have a waiting list because some of the young people they feel a little bit more you know, safe and secure in a specialized shelter, so in that... DYCD how do you deal with a situation like that; to make sure that the

1 providers that do have waiting lists; that you do
2 know meet that need and not just saying that you have
3 no waiting lists and you can get a bed anytime?

4
5 DEPUTY COMMISSONER HASKELL: Commissioner
6 has testified on this in the past and we've never
7 testified that every site always has capacity for
8 every young person or that every provider, so two
9 things with respect to that. We're looking at the
10 system overall to make sure we have a bed and we are
11 looking at the subgroups of young people; male or
12 female or pregnant or parenting, LGBT. We look to
13 see that we have a bed available and I won't testify
14 that we're there 100% of the time, but we are... we're
15 very close. We're able to place virtually every
16 young person every 21 at this moment. What we have
17 been saying to providers over the last three years is
18 like there is funding and we are growing, so if you,
19 as a provider, are experiencing wait lists... of
20 course, we've been encouraging providers to develop
21 new capacity; to develop new sites. We have been...
22 Randy Scott has been supporting providers you know,
23 every year; multiple providers. That's how we've
24 been successful growing. So we are paying attention
25 to subgroups. When we testify, we don't testify that

every shelter has capacity, but that we have a bed for a young person somewhere in the city.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Okay, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Does that answer your question, Council Member Chin?

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: For now.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: For now? Okay, thank you. She gave you a pass. I want to... in the interest of time, Commissioner, we have 30 people who want to testify and talk about this budget and so we're going to refrain from asking the rest of our questions, but what I am going to do is have them emailed to you and we would like a response to the questions.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Certainly.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And so I would like to make a request that you; your staff be able to be here to listen to the testimony of the people who are out here on the frontlines dealing with the issues of youth development, and so I want to thank you for being here today to testify and with that, I will call the next panel.

COMMISSIONER CHONG: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you.

[Pause]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Okay, we're going to ask the next panel to come up. Brian Licata from UAU; Walter Sipser from Samaritans of New York; Jesse Laymon or Lymon, New York City Employment and Training Coalition; Annie Minguez, Good Shepherd and Faith Behum from UJA Federation New York. And we're going to ask you to come up. We're going to ask everyone to keep their testimony to not more than three minutes. We're going to run the clock and I thank all of you for staying; all of you who have been patiently waiting.

[Pause]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And so will you speak into the mic; identify yourself and the organization that you are representing before you start your testimony? And we can begin.

[Pause]

BRIAN LICATA: Thank you, Chair Rose. My name is Brian Licata. I am from United Activities on Staten Island. I'd like to thank you for your time today. Listening to DYCD present; listening to the comments that you made, we also echo a lot of the same feelings.

Currently, United Activities serves a lot of different programs on Staten Island. We have an OSY program; an ISY program. We have a Young Adult Literacy Program. We have an SYEP program; Work, Learn, Grow; Ladders for Leaders; SONYC; COMPASS and a myriad of other alphabetical letters. With these programs, we are serving in excess of 15,000 youth on Staten Island every year. What we've seen is that in between the budget dance our youth are strapped, our parents are strapped, but we've noticed that over the course of the last few years, City Council has been fantastic with stepping in; specifically with certain programs. I'd like to thank you for everything that you've done with the Work, Learn, Grow Program. I was very sad to see that it was not in the Mayor's budget.

I'd like to concentrate on the Out of School Youth Program and the Work, Learn, Grow Program. Out of School Youth serves young adults, ages 16-24 that are no longer in school and are currently not working. It tries to give them an avenue to get back into school or to get a career, not a part-time job. This program is not funded to the level that it needs to be. Currently, we are

1 serving 60 students on Staten Island; 60. There are
2 5,000 youth on Staten Island, ages 18-24 that fit
3 that demographic. We are not putting a dent at all.
4 Not only is it not funded to the service level, it is
5 not funded to the dollar level. We cannot do the
6 work that we need to do. The job is fantastic, but
7 what is needed is the mental services. What is
8 needed is the housing services. We can do everything
9 that we want with training youth for jobs. If they
10 do not have the wrap around services that are needed,
11 it's for nothing.
12

13 The Work, Learn, Grow Program has been a
14 great counterpart to the Summer Youth Program. It
15 enables youth to work an additional 25 weeks. It
16 gives employers a chance to train them and hire them
17 on their own. The employers still come back to
18 Summer Youth. In fact, over the last few years they
19 value the Summer Youth Program more than ever.
20 Without the Work, Learn, Grow Program, you are
21 indirectly taking over \$18 million out of the New
22 York City economy that the youth put back into the
23 economy. This program is a year-to-year program. It
24 is not contracted. It is not easy to run, as a
25 provider. It is not easy for a school to utilize or

for youth to utilize. These programs need to be funded at the correct level if we are to serve New York City youth. I thank you for your time today.
[chime]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Next? Turn your microphone on, please.

WALTER SIPSER: There we go. Good afternoon. My name is Walter Sipser and I'm public education associated with the Samaritans of New York. I want to thank Chair Rose and the members of the City Council's Committee on Youth Services for the opportunity to present testimony today on behalf of Samaritans Suicide Prevention Center.

As Samaritans public education associate, I'm proud to say that Samaritans has a long history of working collaboratively with the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development going back over 25 years to our work helping to train and create a Youthline.

To this day, DYCD continues to rely on Samaritans for technical support and professional development training for its staff and the youth they serve tied to suicide awareness and prevention planning and for knowledge of current research, best

practices and community resources tied to youth mental health. In many ways, Samaritans work parallels that of DYCD, as we both provide support to New York City youth who are struggling with mental health and behavioral problems. They say that children are our future. When it comes to violence, self-harming and suicidal behavior, the question remains how well are we preparing our youth for that future?

The CDC reports suicide is second leading cause of death of teenagers, third for those 15-24, and fourth for 10-14 year olds. The Youth Risk Behavior Survey states that 18% of New York City considered suicide last year and as many as 8% attempt suicide, the highest rates among young female Hispanics and Asians, LGBTQ adolescents and youth living in poverty. Add that the highest rates of self-inflicted injuries opioid abuse and related hospitalizations in New York are found in 15-19 year olds, and the need to increase our young people's understanding of suicide and how to cope with crisis is imperative.

Samaritans Caring Community Suicide Prevention Education Project, which we have submitted

1
2 to the Council's Speaker for funding Fiscal Year
3 2019, addresses this particular issue. We hope you
4 will consider supporting it. Having operated New
5 York City's 24-hour suicide hotline for over 35 years
6 and developed the city's first suicide prevention
7 public education program and trained over 40,000
8 teachers, guidance counselors, social workers and
9 other healthcare providers working with at-risk
10 youth, Samaritans is in the best position to address
11 this problem.

12 Suicide has increased in New York City
13 for the past three years. The DOE tells us that they
14 have seen significant increases over the last year
15 and a number of incidents involving self-harming by
16 students.

17 Every year one in five New Yorkers
18 experiences a mental disorder and 60% never receive
19 care, destroying lives and families and costing New
20 York State \$1.8 billion from suicide alone.
21 Something must be done and it starts with our young
22 people. We need to address the needs of New York
23 City's underserved youth, provide alternatives to the
24 standard programs and services available [chime] and
25

engage those community partners. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you. Next?

ANNIE MINGUEZ: Thank you, Chair and thank you for the line of questioning earlier today of the DYCD Commissioner.

My name is Annie Minguez. I'm the Director of Government and Community Relations for Good Shepherd Services. We're not only a summer camp provider, but also a Runaway Homeless Youth provider and I wanted to just shorten my statement to be sure to allow time for others.

Good Shepherd Services is also a member of the Campaign for Children and with some of my colleagues that are here today, we're once again thanking the Council for ensuring that all after-school programs include summer programming and that the Executive Budget that the Mayor will be putting out next month includes at least those 34,000 middle school slots.

You know, about two weeks the City Council passed an important package of Runaway and Homeless bills, which would increase the age of eligibility for Runaway Homeless Youth services from

21 to 25 and extend the amount of time youth can remain in Runaway Homeless shelters. We anticipate these bill will become law. This is momentous and we thank the Council for all they've been doing in that area. We, at Good Shepherd Services, of course, urge the administration to include funding to address this new need in the incoming Executive Budget, since this is going to a new population that we're going to have to serve and again, we're asking that the administration add \$10.2 million of funding to enable DYCD to add 100 beds for 21-24 year olds; add 15 Runaway Homeless Youth housing specialists; create two new drop-in centers and increase crisis TIL contracts by 7% and I know that other folks will be testifying and can provide more information on that.

Good Shepherd Services is also part of the administration's Non-Profit Resiliency Committee, so I wanted to be sure to again, thank the Council for its leadership and championing for years to increase funding for Human Services contracts. These investments to the Human Services workforce across the city recognize the role. Those providing critical services to New Yorkers in need are to the progress of our city. Having said that, we have

received a COLA contract from DYCD. We received notification on our two BEACON contracts that we have; however, no time frame has been given and in some cases agencies have not provided additional information about that.

Just in very short, Good Shepherd Services supports the following investments in FY 19: include [inaudible] cost escalation formulas in all new Human Services procurements for the duration of the contract and develop a framework to increase all contracts and all new procurements with a minimum of 15% in direct cost rates; 37% fringe rates; 10% increase for occupancy [chime] programs basic costs and 10% increase to casualty and liability insurance. Thank you so much for this opportunity.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you for your testimony. Do you have print copies?

ANNIE MINGUEZ: I do.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Could you make sure that we get some for the record?

ANNIE MINGUEZ: Yes, yes.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you.

ANNIE MINGUEZ: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And before you start,
is there anyone still here from the administration?
[background voice] Okay, alright. I'm watching you.
[laughter] Okay, next?

FAITH BEHUM: Hi. Well, good afternoon,
Chairperson Rose and members of the Committee on
Youth Services, Council Member Chin. My name is
Faith Behum and I am an Advocacy and Policy Advisor
at UJA-Federation of New York. [off mic] I'm going
to switch because this... I'm sorry. There we go.
That's a little better, okay.

On behalf of the UJA, our network of non-
profit partners and those we serve, thank you for the
opportunity to testify on the importance of
maintaining and expanding services for the youth of
New York City. Established over 100 years ago, UJA-
Federation of New York is one of the nation's largest
local philanthropies. We support nearly 100 non-
profit organizations, serving those that are most
vulnerable and in need of programs and services.
Youth focused programs our network of non-profit
partners oversee, funded by DYCD include Summer Youth
Employment Programs, COMPASS and SONYC Programs,
BEACONS and Cornerstones.

We would like to thank the City Council for its efforts and commitment in the Fiscal Year 2018 Budget to increase the funding for Human Service Contracts. These investments, once fully implemented, will better allow for Human Service workers across the city to provide critical services to New Yorkers in need. This year, however, there remain a number of areas that are either unfunded or underfunded and will challenge our non-profit partners as they attempt to serve youth across New York City. In my written testimony, I talk about how we're looking for a restore for funding for COMPASS elementary after-school programs, which is \$16 million, ensuring elementary after-school programs are funded at the same rates and also the importance of funding the minimum wage mandate for our Summer Youth Employment Programs.

But what I want to talk about very quickly is there was a lot of discussion between DYCD and the Council as far as what providers can do when they get money at a certain point in the budget cycle. So I have an example here from the summer of 2016, when the Mayor did not include funding for the Middle School Summer Programs in the Preliminary or

1 the Executive Budget. Thankfully, the City Council
2 pushed for this funding and it was included in the
3 adopted budget. So in the adopted budget the
4 administration put in \$17 million for 26,000
5 children. This was from one year only, but because
6 this came through in June, it was really challenging
7 for our organizations to hire staff and then fill the
8 slots in time for July Summer Camp. So I thank our
9 Good Shepherd partners, people from Children's Aid,
10 UJA. UJA is a part of the Campaign for Children. We
11 all are amazed by the work that our providers do, but
12 there are some times where if you're just not given
13 the right time and the resources to prepare these
14 programs, you just can't do them in a way that you
15 want to. So I just really wanted to make that point.
16 Thank you.

17
18 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you so much.

19 [chime] Questions? Any questions for this panel?
20 Alright.

21 JESSE LAYMON: I should actually...

22 [interposing]

23 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: No? Okay, thank you
24 so much.

JESSE LAYMON: I think I have to...

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Oh, oh, I'm sorry.

JESSE LAYMON: Actually testify. Yes, sorry.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: I'm so sorry.

JESSE LAYMON: I'll be quick, don't worry.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: No, no.

JESSE LAYMON: There were five of us, so it's was easy to lose track. But thank you, Chairwoman Rose and thank you, Councilwoman Chin for having us. My name is Jesse Laymon and I'm here from the New York Employment and Training Coalition and by and large, we want to echo what many of our colleagues and peers and our range of providers organizations, many of whom are members of the Employment and Training Coalition, will have to say about a range of topics. In particular, I'll just sort of list a few that I know have been or will be covered extensively that we fully support and appreciate your efforts to push the department to fully fund SYEP; Work, Learn, Grow and literacy programs, both for adults and young adults are vital

components of a full set of city services that prepare young people on a pathway towards the workforce.

So the Employment and Training Coalition represents all the groups in New York that help people get jobs; that help people get the skill that they need to get meaningful employment and we certainly see that New York City's untapped workforce is by and large young people and adults who do not have or have not yet received the level of education and skills development that they need to get those really good jobs that are available and that our economy does provide and we need to make sure that we provide city services that help them get there.

The one thing I will testify on that I don't think will be as extensively covered by other testifiers here today, and it fits in with that larger narrative, is the disappointment that we have that DYCD had not taken up more of a responsibility of playing a role within the larger framework of the Mayor's Career Pathways Plan. The Career Pathways Plan, which is the blueprint and vision for Workforce Services in New York City and is one that the community supports, laid out certain benchmarks to be

hit by 2020, and one of the most important of those and very relevant to youth are what called Bridge programs, which are programs that help people that are missing a basic skill; either literacy or numeracy or English language skills, get those skills so that they can then get on their way to more advanced training or a career. And the city laid out a benchmark of \$60 million in annual funding by 2020. The most recent budget had less than \$10 million, so they are well short of that goal. We believe DYCD should be the home of a sizable portion of that \$60 million, perhaps approximately \$15 million or one-quarter of it and we would like to see that be one area that DYCD would advocate for themselves and you would help them advocate for in the future, and that is something that we think would be complementary with some of the programs that already exist. There are literacy programs and other programs that could be transformed into full Bridge programs with additional funding. So that's something we'd like to bring up for future consideration and thank you for giving us this time.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And we will include that in the questions that we [chime] ask the administration.

JESSE LAYMON: Great. Thank... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And so... [crosstalk]

JESSE LAYMON: You very much.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: We do... you know, we'll be glad to get back to you with an answer.

JESSE LAYMON: Great. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you. Okay, thank you. Our next panel? Alright, okay. Sheila Wells, Sports and Arts in School Foundation; Chrissy Odalen, New York road Runners; Madison Hernandez, Girl Scouts of Greater New York; Kate Bancks, PowerPlay NYC; Daisy Torres, PowerPlay NYD; Scott Daly, NYJTL and Brenda and Phylisia Cannon, parent and daughter talking about New York Road Runners. That's a pretty large panel. So wow. As soon as you get seated, could we get you to identify; to state your name and your organization and begin your testimony?

MADISON HERNANDEZ: Good afternoon. My name is Madison Hernandez. I'm 11 years old and I am a proud Girl Scout. I joined my current troop at

1
2 seven years old as a Brownie and I'm currently a
3 first-year cadet. Throughout my years of being a
4 Girl Scout, I've always found that developing a sense
5 of leadership and self-confidence is very crucial in
6 the real world. Girl Scouts has shown me again and
7 again that I should proud to be a girl and a woman
8 and that I do have the power to make an impact on the
9 world.

10 According to a study made by the AAUW,
11 American Association of University Women, women in
12 leadership positions within businesses are a
13 minority, considering that only 5% of women are CEOs
14 of S&P companies. It's important that the children
15 of today are taught well because after all, they are
16 the people of tomorrow. These lyrics say it all: I
17 believe that children are our future. Teach them
18 well and let them lead the way. Show them all the
19 beauty they possess inside. Give them a sense of
20 pride to make it easier. These are lyrics from
21 Whitney Houston's song, "The Greatest Love of All."
22 This just goes on to show that the theme of children
23 deserving a way to get a head start on their future
24 is popular in pop culture too. However, not many
25 children, especially girls, due to the large gender

1 gap in leadership, have access to proper guidance or
2 training to help themselves become the strong,
3 confident women they can be. Girl Scouts provides
4 guidance and training to build the courage, character
5 and confidence of girls who can make the world a
6 better place. Girl Scouts encourages girls like me,
7 whether they're a Girl Scout or not, to be a G-I-R-L
8 or a girl every day. G-I-R-L stands for go-getter,
9 innovator, risk taker and leader.
10

11 If you give money to the Girl Scouts of
12 Greater New York, they can use the money to support
13 the incredible programs they offer to girls. For
14 example, GSGNY's Breaking the Code and Fundamental
15 Robotics Program exposes girls to STEM, Science,
16 Technology, Engineering and Math Fields, where the
17 fastest growing jobs and highest earning potential
18 are. Each year, GSGNY adds similar programs or
19 improves their current programs to expose even more
20 girls to STEM careers and so they can develop their
21 communication and teamwork skills. The Breaking the
22 Code and Fundamental Robotics Program are only some
23 ways GSGNY wants to promote some of these important
24 skills to girls, whether they're at the age of five
25 or about to head off to college at 18.

Your help to fund these amazing programs would be greatly appreciated by girls in GSGNY. Thank you for listening.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you.

SHEILA WELLS: Good afternoon. Sheila Wells, Sports and Arts in Schools Foundation. I am the Director of Programs and Special Initiatives. First, let me start by thanking City Council for your unwavering support. Since your investment, Sports and Arts in Schools Foundation has been able to substantially impact the lives of hundreds of thousands of young people.

Currently, SASF is serving 35,000 youth in 2018 in over 210 programs, providing programs that reach almost every New York City Council District. 85% of our principals state that SASF supports student academics. 85% of our principals recognize that SASF supports the development of 21st Century skills. 90% of our principals report that SASF supplements their school with skill-based enrichment activities, sport, art, STEM and leadership. In an effort to maintain the highest quality of service, SASF employees are paid an equitable rate of no less

than \$15.00 an hour for over 17,000 New York City residents.

As the 21st Century matures, it becomes more apparent that the skills needed to thrive in the next half century and deeply embedded in the realms of Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math, STEAM. The lack of access to high quality programs that incorporate STEAM during the summer months leaves New York's neediest families without the opportunities afforded for more affluent New Yorkers.

SASF is answering this challenge with its 2018 Summer Camp theme, Generation NEXT. By leveraging its experience providing quality STEAM, academic supports and arts programs to New York City's youth. Our goal is to position SASF Summer Camps to support the growth of the 21st Century learning skills. With the support of City Council, SASF will provide children an experience that otherwise would only be available to families who can afford private technology camps at a cost of \$950.00 a week per child. With the request additional funding of \$500,000, SASF will be positioned to meet the rising costs of its existing Summer Camp programs and increase its camp's budgets to reflect actual

operating costs; increase the hours of service provided to every City Council Camp by 20%; introduce new STEAM programs to every City Council Camp; create five new STEAM camps, one in each borough, which will incorporate the Common Core standards and NEXT Generation Science standards through a combination of workshops and field trips.

SASF, its students and families are extraordinarily grateful for the support provided by New York City Council. The needs of our families inspire us to introduce new [chime] elements to the City Council Camp. I ask on behalf of the 35,000 youngsters that we serve to support our \$1.5 million full year 2019 funding request in advance, and thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you.

CHRISSY ODALEN: Good afternoon. My name is Chrissy Odalen and I'm the Senior Director for Youth and Community Programs from New York Road Runners. I'm here with some of my colleagues, as well as one of our parents and participants, and we want to thank you for allowing us to testify today.

Our mission at New York Road Runners is to help and inspire people through running. I'm here

1 today to talk about physical education and how it's
2 falling short in serving New York City's children and
3 meeting the New York State standards, particularly
4 those in low-income communities, and where that's
5 leaving or students in danger of becoming obese and
6 remaining habitually inactive through their lives.
7

8 While New York Road Runners is best known
9 for producing the TCS New York City Marathon, our
10 organization is also the largest non-profit provider
11 of free fitness programs in New York City. We have
12 been providing these programs since 1999 and in the
13 last school year our programs, events and resources
14 touched the lives of 115,000 youth in New York City
15 across 810 unique schools and community centers.

16 I've been working here since '99 and seen
17 our support grow and I've also witnessed the
18 significant progress made in the city's Physical
19 Education program, but there's still a long road to
20 make quality physical education and fitness
21 accessible to all children. We're devoted to making
22 that happen. Our free year-round program is designed
23 to help all kids, Pre-K through Grade 12, build their
24 confidence, motivation and desire to be physically
25 active for life or to become physically literate. We

1
2 emphasize the importance of reading and math for
3 literacy, but movement needs to be afforded the same
4 importance. Without complete and comprehensive
5 physical education, children often only take part in
6 few activities and never develop the range of
7 movement skills that allow them to enjoy and feel
8 confident in participating in physical activity in
9 the long-term.

10 We're in the midst of a health and
11 obesity crisis in New York City, especially for our
12 children. Physical activity lays the groundwork for
13 a healthy life. It's not an extra. It's a critical
14 service. As you may be aware, last year the city
15 responded to this crisis by announcing the Universal
16 PE Initiative that promises a designated PE space for
17 all New York City schools by 2021. This vital role
18 in physical activity has on a child's life and we
19 need to make sure that programming is included in
20 those spaces as well.

21 PE in schools needs this support and NYRR
22 is dedicated to providing that, free of cost, on a
23 large scale. We are requesting \$500,000 in
24 initiative support for our signature youth program,
25

Rising New York Road Runners, which is on track to serve similar numbers as we did last year.

Every single City Council District in New York City has schools and community centers benefitting from this program. We did previously receive generous initiative support of \$250,000 under the Council's Obesity Prevention Initiatives for six years. Unfortunately, that was cut from the FY 17 Budget, effectively defunding New York Road Runners. [chime] During that time we've more than doubled our free service to New York City schools because we recognized the immediate and ongoing need for PE programming that works for each school's unique needs and limitations. With our 2019 request, we are hoping to restore and increase [chime] our funding under a citywide initiative, so we can continue to offer our year-round programs for free. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you. And those of you who are testifying for programs that are not DYCD funded, I encourage you to also speak to DOE or DOH so that it can get onto their budget priorities, okay?

BRENDA CANNON: Good afternoon. My name is Brenda Cannon and I'm from Williamsburg, Brooklyn. I wanted to share with you today the impact Road Runners has had on me and my daughter.

Phylicia is 13 years old and an 8th grader at MS577. When she wanted to run, I could not help her. I'm disabled. She found her youth program at school and started participating. When that wasn't enough, we started going through their websites. We found other programs that they were offering. She joined Road Runners Open Runs. We started at the Brooklyn location. When we first got there, she suffered from anxiety and was very quiet. She sat there, just watched the people run and never moved. It wasn't until the one director came up to her and asked her would she like to join and that was it. It started.

From there, we now participate in three different Open Runs. She is the Youth Ambassador for New York Road Runners and she is only getting started. Last week, she participated in Nationals and she got an academic scholarship to McClancy High School, where she will be attending next year and she can take it from here.

PHYLICIA CANNON: Good afternoon. My name is Phylisia and I am one of the participants in the Rising New York Road Runners Youth Programs and in about February of 2016, I joined the track team in my school, where I learned all of these new activities that I never thought I would ever do, and they taught me how to properly stretch and how to not get injured and then when I did go to the Open Runs, I applied those new skills that I had learned so that I knew exactly how to move on from there and make sure that I would be healthy [background noise] so I could continue doing what I had found out I really loved.

And from there, it kind of went to everyone was like wow, like she's really young. This is really cool. I wish I had started when I was that young and I was like... different people each week were running with me and teaching me new skills and teaching me how to do stuff properly and saying, "No, no, no, don't do that. That will get you injured. Let's do it this way and see how it feels," and that was really helpful for me and I've really continued to work from that and now like she said, I am competing in Nationals and... yes. I'm competing in

1
2 Nationals and I had previously done three half
3 marathons where I'd used all those skills to complete
4 them and it's been a really fun experience and I am
5 hoping that when I am 14 years old, I will be able to
6 volunteer at their events to help the children that
7 are younger than me so that maybe one day they can
8 have experiences like I did and I would really like
9 for the youth of the newer generations to get these
10 experiences like I did and it really helped me and
11 changed me a lot and I am moving on to do good things
12 I hope.

13 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you and
14 congratulations.

15 PHYLICIA CANNON: Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Do you think New York
17 Road Runners could help me? [laughter]

18 PHYLICIA CANNON: Yes, yes, we can.
19 [crosstalk]

20 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you. Thank you.
21 Could the next group.. yes, testify. [background
22 noise] Give us your name and your organizational
23 affiliation. Thank you. Thank you.

24 [Pause]

25 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: You can begin.

KATE BANCKS: [off mic] Good afternoon.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Turn on your mic.

KATE BANCKS: Good afternoon. My name is Kate Bancks. I'm with PowerPlay NYC, the Strategic Partnerships and External Affairs Director. I'm here with PowerPlay participant, Daisy Torres and we'd like to begin by thanking the Council for taking time today to hear our testimony and for their crucial leadership in support of our work in youth development.

PowerPlay advances the lives of girls through sports by developing skills to grow physically, emotionally and academically stronger. We create opportunities for girls, ages 6 to 21 by partnering with schools and community-based organizations to conduct after-school and summer programs that emphasize physical fitness and education. Using sports as our hook, we build the girls' confidence and resiliency from the inside out and create safe spaces where girls learn from each other and from strong female role models.

PowerPlay fills a critical service gap for young women of color in New York City, who face structural barriers, limiting their access to

valuable resources and making them particularly vulnerable. Our programs for girls and young women help to fill the gap through a continuum of services beginning with girls as young as six and intensifying as they mature. We believe that New York City's young women are a valuable source of talent and leadership and in order to thrive they need safe spaces to be active, to think creatively and to talk about issues that affect them.

We're grateful that the City Council acknowledges the importance of prior organizations for girls and we are here to highlight the ways in which our organization's programs, particularly the STARS Citywide Girls Initiative, are extremely necessary. It's now more than ever that we must not lose sight of this need and mission.

For the fourth consecutive year, PowerPlay is the lead agency in the Sports Training and Role-models for Success Citywide Girls Initiative, funded at \$1.2 million by the Council, which offers the city of New York a unique opportunity to support the healthy development of thousands of girls and young women of color.

Created in 2015, with the support of the Council, the STARS Initiative is a collaboration of nine leading New York City non-profits, helping girls and young women of color overcome barriers to success, gain access to high quality out of school activities and develop as leaders in their communities. The nine partners; Girls Write Now, Groundswell, Lower Eastside Girls Club, PowerPlay, Row New York, Sadie Nash Leadership Project, The Armory Foundation, Figure Skating in Harlem and Girls for Gender Equity, all leaders in the out of school time space, will collectively serve more than 4,000 girls this year and deepen programming.

From July 2017 to February 2018, STARS has already served 4,008 youth. That is young people being offered opportunities in every single City Council District in New York.

In the Initiative's fourth year and with the current state of affairs, STARS and organizations like STARS refunding is more critical than ever. We're seeking renewed funding at \$1.2 million to deepen programming, to continue to address girls' needs in the vulnerable immigrant youth community, offer more resources for the LGBTQ community and

continue to explore avenues and programming to address topics like violence in relationships, health, trauma and social activism. Thank you.

[chime]

DAISY TORRES: Good afternoon. My name is Daisy Torres and I'm a senior at Francis Lewis High School in Queens, New York. At Francis Lewis High School, I am part of the Gateway Honors Institute, which focuses on helping low-income minority students through internship and enrichment opportunities during the summer. Gateway was actually the first program that encouraged me to do something valuable with my summer, as my parents couldn't afford to send me to any summer camp or program like my other friends' parents could.

PowerPlay was the first time I became acquainted with girls from all five boroughs of New York City and not only that, they exposed me to every physical activity or sport possible and they let my introvert self become... you know... I don't want to say acquainted; exposed to a lot of fun activities, but most importantly, get to know girls who were going through the same struggle as I was.

As the years go by, women are now being praised for their strong and intelligent characters and I hope this continues as the next generation prepares for their next internship, college or career. Programs like PowerPlay enable girls to think of others and thus, think of themselves in a better light and realize their own potential. The PowerPlay community has motivated me to join non-profits such as the Opportunity Network and

Leadership Enterprise for a Diverse America. Both programs had took place during the summer and I can say that I had spent so much valuable time there. With this endless support, I applied to Princeton University, a place I never imagined myself, but have been blessed with an acceptance last December. Every girl will face a separate struggle at one point in their life, but PowerPlay encourages girls to view this as a way to realize their own potential. Thank you.

SCOTT DALY: Good afternoon. My name is Scott Daly and I am the Director of the Free Community Tennis Programs of NYJTL; that's the New York Junior Tennis and Learning. We are legally incorporated and known as the New York Junior Tennis League.

Let me start by saying that I'm just going to deviate from the testimony that have there in front of you. You can all see it and I'd rather talk to you from what I know, what I see, what I experience throughout the city.

We meet the needs of New York City kids. Last year, we reached... we served over 85,000 children in all of the 51 Council Districts throughout the

1 city. We operate all four seasons of the year, all
2 12 months of the year. Our programs are free across
3 the board. Kids don't need to bring any equipment
4 with them. They don't need to know... have any
5 instruction. When I tell parents all they have to do
6 is bring their child to us, with sneakers on their
7 feet and a smile on their face, to see the
8 astonishment that I get back from them. We're open
9 to all, as I said. We do not close out our programs
10 to anybody. So whereas a season... our spring season
11 is going to start beginning at the end of April, it
12 doesn't matter when you come. It's a registration.
13 It's not an application. There is no waiting list.
14 We turn nobody away. Whenever you come, you're going
15 to play, and we do this only because of the continued
16 support that we've gotten from the New York City
17 Council.

19 What do we do? Well, we have our free
20 community tennis programs, as I just told you, open
21 for kids from 5-18 years of age. We run something
22 called a School Time Tennis Program. We'll reach
23 over 250 to 300 New York City physical education
24 teachers. We invite them up. We train them. We
25 give them equipment to take {background noise} back

to their schools to utilize during the school day.

We give them a full curriculum. I know how

overworked these guys are. We give them the lesson

plans to help them do it. Why? Introduce kids.

Most of the kids that we have are on the lower income

scale; Latinos, Blacks, Asians, immigrant families.

They would never have been exposed to this other than

through these programs, especially the introduction

they're going to get in school through these

teachers.

I heard before questions about SYEP, the

Summer Youth Program. Most of our kids are...

everybody that works for us, by the way, in community

tennis, they're part-time workers. 60% of our staff

during the summer are going to be kids who have come

up through our programs. They're either currently in

high school or just now entering colleges throughout

the city. We take from within. We build from

within.

Before I close, I want you to know that...

and we've been funded [chime] in the past under the

Physical Education and Fitness Initiative where we've

gotten \$800,000. This year, we've increased our ask;

lest I be accused of not asking for more, of \$1.2

million this year. [laughter] But this will
continue... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you.

SCOTT DALY: To serve every district and
bring more programs to more... a battery of programs.
Thank you very much, everyone.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you, thank you.
And our next pane. Natasha Jones, the LGBT Center;
Cesar Zuniga, the Parent-Child Home Program City's
First Readers; Jamie Powlovich from the Coalition for
Homeless Youth; Gregory Brender from United
Neighborhood Housing; Grant Cowles, Citizens
Committee for Children; Alex Corazado, Center for
Family Life and Diana Noriega, the Committee for
Hispanic Children and Families and City's First
Readers. Please come up. Will those of you that are
at the table already please turn the mic on and
identify yourself and your organization, and you can
begin your testimony.

Good afternoon. My name is Natasha Jones
and I serve as the Director of Youth leadership at
the LGBT; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and
Community Center or The Center, and I'm thankful to

the Youth Service Committee's Chair Rose and members of the community for the time today. Thank you.

As the federal government continually works to eradicate LGBT and queer youth people from the fabric of society, the need for high quality youth programming and funding in New York City that prioritizes LGBTQ youth heightens as each day passes. Importantly, high quality youth programming must be inclusive of LGBTQ youth from all different walks of life and no matter what their skill levels. We must allow all LGBTQ youth a fighting chance to overcome multiple facets of discrimination they face for being LGBTQ, in tandem with other identities they may hold, including race, religion and disability, just to name a few.

Recognizing this, Center youth utilizes a multi-tier approach, ensuring that members of our youth program are equipped with a community of peers, academic support and leadership development skills, all of which are critical in helping them learn to lead healthy, successful lives.

Creating or finding safe spaces that do not judge, but rather, celebrate and uplift youth for their sexual orientation and gender identity and

1 expression can be extremely difficult. This
2 complexity leads many Center youth participants to
3 seeking an environment where they can find friends,
4 mentors and role models that are part of the LGBTQ
5 community. As you know, there is a great power in a
6 young person seeing positive role models experiencing
7 affirmative life outcomes by people that may look
8 like them, sound like them or come from a similar
9 familial upbringing. Center youth's community of
10 young folks and alumni is a great example of just
11 this. By cultivating an identity-specific drop-in
12 discussion group, you freely examine the full
13 spectrum of what their orientation, gender identity
14 and expression can be without judgment, without shame
15 and most importantly, alongside community; not alone.

17 Because building community is an ongoing
18 process, Center youth are encouraged to expand in the
19 ways which they multiply their friend group by
20 participating in Center's academic and career
21 development programs. Center youth learn a myriad of
22 academic career and leadership development skills,
23 including personal or professional elevator pitch;
24 how to write a cover letter and how to facilitate a
25 drop-in group with a strong focus on economic

empowerment. The Center youth's programming also teaches participants how to become financially independent.

So the question is not why should the city fund programs that serve LGBTQ youth like the Center's, but rather how can it not? By funding and prioritizing programs that focuses on LGBTQ youth, the city allows youth to define to success for themselves in a space that dramatically increases their chances at success. LGBTQ youth frequently do this inside of [chime] their schools or in their homes. Thank you for this time.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you so much.

ALEXANDER CRUZADO: My name is Alexander Cruzado. I am an Assistant Group Leader at the Center for Family Life BEACON Program at PS 503506 in Sunset Park, Brooklyn. I worked as an SYEP counselor for two years, since the age of 15, as I am now 17. In the context of a summer camp, where over 100 middle schoolers were participants because of funding that the center received their summer expansion.

I didn't grow up in a situation like that of the kids I worked with. I had a good home. I never had to worry about eating. I never had to

1
2 worry about where my next meal would come from. I
3 never had to worry about the home I was going back
4 to, but so many of the children I worked with did and
5 essentially, that made this job so meaningful to me.

6 The simple fact that I could serve as a
7 role model for kids; that I could show them that a
8 young Hispanic man could go onto to achieve
9 academically and actually do something with their
10 lives made me feel like every day I'd work was
11 serving a greater purpose.

12 The boys that I worked with oftentimes
13 didn't have male role models in their lives and I
14 served as that. I served as a role model, who was
15 able to maintain high averages, play sports and lead
16 myself to the prospect of an Ivy League education.
17 In some cases, between the beginning of summer and
18 closings, I had situations where kids themselves had
19 become so attached, they were sad to **[inaudible]** and
20 simply because those bonds had ended.

21 Working with kids every day and doing
22 that job every day of the summer was not only
23 meaningful for them, but also for me, as an SYEP
24 counselor. I'd like to thank DYCD for maintaining
25

SYEP funding and I'm advocating for the reinstatement of summer extension. Thank you. [background noise]

GRANT COWLES: Good afternoon. My name is Grant Cowles and I am the Senior Policy Associate for Youth Justice at Citizens Community for Children. CCC is an independent multi-issue child advocacy organization, dedicated to ensuring every New York child is healthy, housed, educated and safe. We don't do direct services or accept government funds. We just advocate for kids.

I would like to thank City Council Services Committee Chair Deborah Rose, as well as all the members of the Youth Services Committee for holding today's hearing.

CCC is very grateful for the City Council's long-standing commitment to Youth Services. The support and investments that the City Council's put into Youth Services have helped hundreds of thousands of youth and young adults, who now form a foundation for our city's workforce and communities. Our gratitude cannot be overstated.

We also appreciate the investments Mayor de Blasio and DYCD Commissioner Chong have made in Youth Services for the past four years, including

expanding the middle school after-school program, increasing capacity in SYEP and increasing the number and rate for BEACON community centers, and while we are very grateful for the administration's past investments in Youth Services, we are deeply concerned that this year's Preliminary Budget does not build upon these investments and instead, proposes to make several notable cuts.

Our written testimony provides a full recommendation in the budget as it relates to Youth Services, and I simply wanted to quickly summarize a few points. First, we join the Council in recommending that all SONYC Programs are funded for their summer component. We do want to clarify that it is 34,000; at least 34,000 that are going without summer slots, not the 22,000, as was mentioned. We also want to emphasize that this is a cut. There was money funded last year. I think that goes against the idea that this is not... that it's a priority. We also wanted to emphasize the location of these cuts, as most of these are in high needs districts.

Second, CCC recommends that COMPASS elementary after-school programs are restored, expanded, baselined and that the disparate rates are

addressed in the budget. We include details in our written testimony.

Third, we want to ensure that... CCC recommends that the rate for addressing the minimum wage increase for Summer Youth Employment Program is addressed in the budget and we also want to see the Work, Learn and Grow Program restored, expanded and baselined.

Fourth, CCC recommends that there is funding added to address the new needs in the Runaway and Homeless Youth Services Programs. The bills that were recently passed by the City Council expands the capacity for Runaway and Homeless Youth Services is a great advancement, but we specifically ask that \$10.2 million is added to enable DYCD to fund this new capacity.

And finally, we also, as always, recommend that the City Council Initiatives are funded and baselined. Thank you.

CESAR ZUNIGA: Good afternoon. My name is Cesar Zuniga and I am the Research and Evaluation Direction for the Parent-Child Home Program, also known as PCHP.

PCHP's unique focus is on providing parents with the skills, knowledge they need to support school readiness skills in their homes and helping to build home environments that build children's language, literacy, cognitive and social and emotional skills. In doing this work, we are also helping parents learn what to look for in child care settings, how to identify and access their children's next educational step and how to support their children's continued academic progress.

Our partners in this work in New York City and elsewhere in the state include school districts, public libraries, social service agencies, literacy programs and community-based organizations. Focusing on school readiness and early literacy support families challenged by poverty, isolation, limited education and language and literacy barriers. PCHP provided over 46,000 home visits and distributed over 23,000 books and educational toys in New York City last year, with the assistance from the New York City Council's support.

Before children enter Pre-K or Kindergarten, low-income children and low-income from non-native English speaking families in New York City

are likely to be cared for by their family members or in informal settings. They are the least likely children to have access to the information, materials and activities that will build their school readiness skills and ensure the language and early literacy skills they need to enter the classroom, ready to be successful students. For this reason it is particularly important that in supporting the City's First Reader Initiative, we ensure that they and their families have access to knowledge, skills and materials that will support their school readiness.

PCHP provides critical learning tools, books and other educational and language stimulating materials to families with two and three year old children. This is an age group that has often very limited access to literacy support. The program helps families build literacy rich environments in their homes. They are visited twice a week in their homes by an Early Learning Specialist or a home visitor, who introduces the materials to the family and models for the parents how to read, talk and play with their children to build language and critical early literacy skills.

PCHP staff also connect families to other social service supports when necessary and assist parents in registering their children for Pre-K or Head Start. PCHP is pleased to be one of the City's First Reader's Initiative. Working with our partners in this initiative, we are able to not only provide intensive early literacy support to 100 additional families challenged by poverty, isolation and language and literacy barriers in communities [chime], including Astoria, Washington Heights, Sunset Park, Brownsville and we're just asking for continued support for the City's First Reader's Initiative. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you.

DIANA NORIEGA: Good afternoon. My name is Diana Noriega and I am the Chief Program Officer for the Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, also known CHCF.

So we commend Mayor de Blasio and the City Council for addressing the importance of Early Childhood Education and the need for greater investment in our youngest constituents. A special thank you to Council Members Levin and Reynoso for supporting the City's First Readers Initiative.

In light of national political climate, we would also encourage continued timely discussions around childhood literacy and community investments needed for all children. New York City is currently facing a literacy crisis that disproportionately affects children living in poverty and children of color. Approximately 56% of children under the age of five live in or near poverty in New York City. The 3rd grade ELA reading tests show that 32% of Black and Latino children are proficient versus 63% of their White peers across the entire city. So once these children fall behind, we already know what that leads to and we're talking about the school to prison pipeline in particular. 85% of juveniles who've entered the juvenile justice system are functionally illiterate. So there's a direct connection between what we're doing in early childhood and then what happens in their long-term outcomes. So studies show that if we invest more money in the 0-7 age range, we're setting our young children up for a greater success.

City's First Readers, their aim is to help close the achievement gap by providing literacy tools and materials to parents, to children and also

1 we particularly do that with early childcare
2 providers in their home-based centers and we do that
3 through a culturally [**inaudible**] and we provide
4 bilingual books and we train our providers on how to
5 do read out-louds and do the literacy work through a
6 more thoughtful and engaging process with the infants
7 and toddlers they work with.
8

9 So what we're advocating for particularly
10 is for City Council to continue to fund City's First
11 Readers, particularly to increase it to \$6 million,
12 if possible so we can continue to do meaningful work
13 in our communities that we know will set our children
14 up for success once they enter the enter the K-12;
15 Pre-K even through 12 system.

16 I want to talk a little bit... switch gears
17 and talk a little bit about our Youth Development
18 Programs at the Committee. We currently have after-
19 school programs at PS 59 and MS 279 in the Bronx, one
20 of the poorest congressional districts in the
21 country. We're serving 240 elementary school
22 students and we were able to add an additional 110
23 students at PS 59 due to Empire State funding. What
24 folks don't realize is actually the advantage after-
25 school funding is actually on the chopping block on

1 the state budget level, so we're going to have to
2 shut down our longest running program. We've been at
3 that school for 19 years and now we're at risk of
4 shutting it down. And the other thing that we're
5 really aware of is that our parents are saying that
6 it's even not enough. So at one school we have a
7 wait list of 95 [chime] students and another wait
8 list of 51 students at another school. So to Council
9 Member Margaret Chin's point, we want to advocate
10 also for a Universal Elementary after-school
11 programming and to restore and baseline that funding
12 to make sure that all of students have access to
13 quality programming. [background voices]

15 GREGORY BRENDER: Thank you, Chair Rose
16 and Council Member Chin and all of the staff of the
17 Council and the whole Youth Committee; not just for
18 hearing us, which we always appreciate, but just for
19 the amazing advocates you've been for our people; for
20 coming to the press conferences today and earlier and
21 to really pushing these issues. I have written out
22 my... [crosstalk]

23 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: I want to thank you
24 for being there and helping to organize the...
25 [crosstalk]

GREGORY BRENDER: Oh, my pleasure.

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Rally today. Thank you.

GREGORY BRENDER: Thank you. I have submitted written testimony that goes through kind of each of the points in Youth Services we were talking about, but I'll kind of give a brief, since a lot of these things have been covered by other speakers, and just say UNH is part of the Campaign for Children and also the Campaign for Summer Jobs, so all of [inaudible] are aligned with both of those coalitions.

So I think you already know a lot about [inaudible] on Summer SONYC and how important that is. I would just really stress the particular thing we hear from our members at United Neighborhood Houses is really the importance of stability and that's why it's been so important to stress this funding comes in the Executive Budget. It becomes impossible you know, in the end of June to ramp up programs of this complexity, given that you need to do you know, screening of the staff, enrolling kids

and you know, working with DOA to secure sites is not always the easiest thing.

I want to talk a little also about after-school programs for elementary school students.

There's a significant portion of the COMPASS system that is supported by the City Council and has been now some of them for five years and some for three years, where the City Council did some expansion.

These are programs that either were long-standing programs that didn't get contracts when COMPASS funding was baselined or programs that were part of the intentional expansion on the part of the City Council to find more service in high need areas, so we very much want to see the Council restore those funds.

With the Summer Youth Employment Program, as you may know, in May 2016, UNH and the Campaign for Summer Jobs released a white paper showing how Summer Jobs should expand and this influenced a lot of the process around the Youth Employment Taskforce and then what became the concept paper for DYCD Summer Jobs, the first part of which, the school-based model has already [background noise] been awarded.

Our biggest concern looking forward is the rates in the SYEP Program. The concept paper gave a range of \$325 to \$1,000 per youth. This range actually reflects the current costs of the different models from YY... from Younger Youth to the Ladders for Leaders model and we know now only the rates for the school-based model, which are about \$800 per youth. The concept paper really envisions a much more intensive level of service, where providers are [chime] doing more counseling, doing more to connect young people to jobs that meet their interests and so we expect to see and need to see higher rates for those programs in order to have the staff to support these things.

One other quick thing. I just wanted to give our strong support for the Work, Learn and Grow Program for both baselining and expanding that model and really talk about how, as Brian Licata mentioned, this is a program that really supports SYEP because it's supports SYEP from a programmatic perspective because it has you know the young person working year-round and we'd actually like to see the model moved to somewhere where they could potentially be at the same employer year-round, but it also actually

really supports the providers because this is a school year program. It means that you have staff there who are working year-round and help prepare for SYEP when summer comes and you have a much larger number of youth you serve. So thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Okay, thank you. And our next panel...

[interposing]

JAMIE POWLOVICH: Oh, sorry, one more.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Oh, I'm sorry, sorry. I'm so sorry.

JAMIE POWLOVICH: You're fine. It's alright. Good afternoon. My name is Jamie Powlovich and I am the Executive Director of the Coalition for Homeless Youth, otherwise known as CHY. CHY has advocated for the needs of Runaway and Homeless Youth for nearly 40 years. The Coalition is comprised of 60 providers of services to homeless youth across New York State. 29 of our members are here in New York City. Our member include providers that are directly contracted to provide services to Runaway and Homeless Youth, as well as agencies that intersect with the Runaway and Homeless Youth population within the larger scope of their work.

I would like to thank Chair Rose and the members of the Youth Services Committee for holding today's hearing. I would also to thank Speaker Johnson and the Council for their leadership in making long overdue changes to the DYCD homeless youth system with the passage of the three Runaway and Homeless Youth bills a couple weeks ago.

It is unfortunate that in a city as progressive as New York City, we had to pass laws to force the administration to do something that they could've done voluntarily, but we are extremely grateful for the dedication of the City Council to do the right thing on behalf of the countless homeless young people and providers who have been pushing for these changes for several years.

In regards to Runaway and Homeless Youth funding, I go into a little bit more detail in my testimony, but for the sake of time, I'll just summarize here. We do have an additional ask to support Runaway and Homeless Youth and as it's been echoed by two of our members already, our ask is an additional \$10.2 million. That would create 100 additional DYCD Runaway and Homeless Youth beds for the new older youth category of 21-25 year olds. It

1 would increase the DYCD 24-hour drop-in center
2 capacity by providing funding for two additional
3 centers to be hopefully located in the Bronx and
4 Brooklyn, meaning that all boroughs, with the
5 exception of Staten Island, would have their own.
6 Number three, to add 15 housing specialists. Right
7 now, unlike DHS or ACS, DYCD does not currently fund
8 a specialized position within their programs to help
9 young people obtain permanent long-term housing and
10 if you look at DYCD's data about how they're doing in
11 meeting that goal, the numbers are pretty low. And
12 last, we are also asking for an additional 7% general
13 contract increase to help providers meet the real
14 needs and the real costs to run the programs.

16 I also would like to thank you for asking
17 DYCD about the MMR and the way that they do calculate
18 their outcomes. We do find it extremely problematic
19 that they are including all discharge option, with
20 the exception of unknown or self-discharge in the
21 outcome of [chime] suitable environment, and not only
22 does it include young people that are being
23 incarcerated, it also includes those that are being
24 hospitalized and those that are being discharged to
25 other not family or friend, which, as a provider

1
2 myself, that was the option you checked when young
3 people are returning to their traffickers or pimps.
4 We are working with the administration around these
5 outcomes and we hope to have it changed. Thank you
6 very much for our time.

7 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you for that
8 depressing note. We're going to work on that. We're
9 going to work on other suitable placements. That's
10 not acceptable.

11 Mateo Guerrero-Tabares, Make the Raod and
12 TGMC Solutions Coalition; Andrea Bowen, Transgender
13 and Gender Non-Conforming Solutions Coalition; Susan
14 Lacerte, Queens Botanical Gardens and Cultural World
15 and Richard Holliman... you know who I'm talking about,
16 right? Hoo... Hoo Haram? I can't read it. Queens
17 Historical Society. Thank you. Okay and then we
18 have one more panel after this. Thank you, very
19 patient people. Please turn your mic on, say your
20 name... state your name and your organization and begin
21 your testimony.

22 ANDREA BOWEN: Good afternoon, Chair
23 Rose, Council Member Chin and the Council staff. My
24 name is Andrea Bowen and I am a consultant working
25 with the Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming

1 Solutions Coalition. The Coalition is made up of
2 several organizations, including Anti-Violence
3 Project, the Audre Lorde Project, Sylvia Rivera
4 Project, the LGBT Center, the TransLatina Network and
5 GMHC. They formed on the impetus of the LGBT caucus
6 of City Council and the previous speaker to figure
7 out what solutions were needed from TGNC people
8 throughout the city. Then we held forums in all five
9 boroughs, including Staten Island, to figure out what
10 the community needed and since then, we've been
11 boiling those down to we have six budget asks this
12 budget season and we also have a longer policy brief
13 that we've put online.

14
15 Mateo is going to speak in a moment about
16 programs around legal support for undocumented
17 immigrants. I'm going to speak on a proposal about a
18 TGNC employment program. We have been pitching these
19 to the Mayor's staff and agencies, and in the event
20 that they don't end up in the Executive Budget, we'd
21 love your support in trying to get them in.

22 So the TGNC community faces a crisis of
23 unemployment, especially when you compare the TGNC
24 community against lesbian, gay and bisexual people
25 who aren't TGNC, you have even more disparate stats.

1 Just for example... let's see. You have 16.2% of TGNC
2 in New York City respondents to a survey a couple of
3 years were neither unemployed nor in school compared
4 to 9.9% of lesbian, gay, bisexual respondents. We
5 also know that TGNC people face problems in
6 completing job training programs, and TGNC people
7 face special needs in getting jobs. So like when
8 you're applying, what if your legal name doesn't
9 match the name that you usually go by? What if
10 you've transitioned since you had an old job or what
11 do you tell your old employer? Do you end up outing
12 yourself when you're filing for a background check?
13 Things like that. So we're asking for a program.
14 We'd like part of it to be housed in DYCD and then an
15 adult part to be housed in HRA, so a youth portion
16 for DYCD; adult for HRA that would support TGNC
17 people in aiming for careers. So it would basically
18 money for like a staff that would help people
19 navigate the employment system and place people in
20 appropriate job programs, money for subsidized wages
21 and a little bit of money for evaluation and
22 advertising. You were asking for the Mayor's side,
23 so we'd like to see this baselined over several
24 years, but again, if this doesn't end up in the
25

Executive, we'd love your support in pushing this.

So thank you for your time.

SUSAN LACERTE: Hello, I'm Susan Lacerte from Queens Botanical Garden and I love your name, Rose. Yes.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you.

SUSAN LACERTE: Yes. [laughter]

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: You certainly... I'll make sure you get your funding.

SUSAN LACERTE: Yeah, thank you. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you.

SUSAN LACERTE: And you're welcome out for a tour any time. I'm from Queens Botanical Garden, which is one of the 33 institutions that are in the Cultural Institutions Group. This is my colleague, Richard, who's in what they call the Programs Group. He will speak in a moment.

We work with many, many different partners around the whole city to provide all sorts of programming and support for community services and last year the Cultural Committee did a big plan with the Commissioner and came out with a big Create NYC Program, which is about equity, social and economic

1 impact, inclusion, lifestyles and I would like to say
2 that the cultural community has really proven that we
3 can help with citywide initiatives and needs. Like
4 you think of IDNYC and how successful that was. It's
5 because... partly because they came to us and said,
6 "Would you help?" And we offered all sort of
7 admissions and benefits to people and they said,
8 "Let's sign up." Also in composting and dealing with
9 organics citywide we do a lot of education and so I
10 think listening to the testimony here today that this
11 is also an area that would help with and in fact, we
12 already do because so many of our organizations
13 already participate in Summer Youth Employment
14 Program, the Ladders for Leaders, the SONYC, the
15 COMPASS, all of these words and phrases, some of
16 which understand and some of which I don't, but we do
17 that. And so at the Queens Botanical Garden in the
18 summer we have about 35 youth that come and what we
19 do is we raise private money to help make that a
20 successful program because you know, youth are
21 wonderful, but they've never had a job. They don't
22 know they're not supposed to talk on their cell
23 phone, but they have to sign in and sign out. So we
24 hire people to help with that. We have about eight
25

people per one counselor and we raise about \$35,000-\$40,000 a year just to do that, so there's a way.

The Cultures are looking for the \$10 million that was in the budget last year to be baselined and this year we're also looking for another \$20 million citywide, of course, to help carry out some of the initiatives that were in the Create NYC and I think given all of our combined interest in youth and in healthy communities and providing opportunities for young people to grow in their lives, to get into the workforce, and I will say, we find a lot of the youth they come; they haven't had breakfast. They don't have money for transportation, so you know, if DYCD were able to give funding like let's say \$1,000 per youth, something on that [chime] order, it would help provide the supervision that's needed and also Metro cards and food. Right now, our tai chi group brings in pork buns. The Hindu temple sends us samosas. The Mexican guy down the street sends empanadas. The pizza guy, so you know, we could do more if we had more. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you.

[background voices]

SUSAN LACERTE: Oh, sorry, did I butt in?

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: I would assume also that you spoke before the Libraries and Cultural Committee?

SUSAN LACERTE: Some people from our group did, yes.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Okay.

SUSAN LACERTE: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Alright, thank you.

MATEO GUERRERO-TABARES: Hi. Yeah, so I'm here also with Andy. My name is Mateo Guerrero. I'm part of Make the Road New York. I'm the Leadership Development Coordinator and we're also part of the TGNC Solutions Coalition. So I am here today to testify about the urgency of having immigration lawyers that are competent to support TGNC communities; Transgender and the non-conforming folks in particular.

So just a little bit of... so what I wanted to share is my experience, right? So I migrated from Colombia in 2010 with both of my parents and when we migrated, it was very challenging because we were undocumented. Not only was that a challenge in terms of like me being able to go to school and continue to

work to be able to support my family. This was at 15 years old, but also because at that time, my gender was different. I presented as a woman before and so when I shared with my father my sexuality as a lesbian, we spent about two months with like heavy arguments and he left to Colombia and we ended communication and so during that... after he left, it was extremely difficult for my mother and I to sustain ourselves, so like housing and stability, food, everything was very challenging, but one of the things that was there was that my mom was always supportive and she always encouraged me to like participate in different youth programs and that's when I went to Make the Road New York. At Make the Road New York I started doing organizing. It was an amazing... I remember I went there, they were [inaudible] undocumented, all afraid and it was the first time I said it out loud a little bit... and I was a little bit scared because you know, it was the first time, but I stayed there and in 2012, when Obama announced DACA, I thought I was going to be able to qualify for DACA, but because I came in 2010, I wasn't able to qualify because the requirement is that you enter before 2007. So that immediately was

1 very hard for me to hear, but the lawyers... the
2 immigration lawyers at Make the Road actually did a
3 screening for me and they asked me several questions
4 and they were able to find out that I qualified for
5 SIJS. As a queer, transgender young person I was
6 able to qualify for SIJS, and SIJS stands for a
7 Special Immigrant Juvenile Status, which is for folks
8 who are under 18 and have a guardian or a parent or
9 are under 21 and have a guardian or are in the foster
10 care system to be able to obtain an immigration
11 relief status. So I was able to qualify for that
12 because immigration lawyers at Make the Road had the
13 training to make the connections between TGNC
14 communities and the access to different immigration
15 reliefs.

17 And so this is a testimony... a success... a
18 testimony of success of being able to outreach to
19 TGNC youth; to be able to adjust their status. So
20 two of the recommendations that came from the
21 Coalition is one, to provide trainings to immigration
22 lawyers to be culturally sensitive; [chime] competent
23 to support TGNC folks and also to hire more
24 immigration lawyers in different organizations that
25 already do this work. Thank you for your time.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you.

MATEO GUERRERO-TABARES: Oh and in the back is the platform, sorry.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Okay, thank you.

RICHARD HOURAHAN: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Okay.

RICHARD HOURAHAN: Yes, my name is Richard Hourahan. I'm the Curator and Collections Manager at the Queens Historical Society and I've been personally involved in the Summer Youth Employment Program at the Queens Historical Society and I've worked with 35 participants over the past three summers.

Briefly put, my organization has benefitted greatly from the contributions of these youths. They have been extremely conscientious and they have absorbed and expanded on everything our programs have offered. One does not immediately associate historical societies with youth programs; summer or after school. This, unfortunately, I believe is the result of a stereotypical misunderstanding of what history is: an unending list of names and dates. That may have been true of classroom teaching 75 years ago. It never was true

of the serious study of history, but contemporary history studies all peoples, events and structures of communities and societies. This is certainly the case with my organization and in our youth programs we stress the continuities and discontinuities of history in Queens, our nation and the world. Over 48% of Queens residents are foreign-born. Another 25% are children of parents who are foreign-born. 75% of the participants in our youth programs belong to these two categories.

Well, the Queens Historical Society does not have any contracts for COMPASS or School's Out New York City. We would love some. They are very important and should be expanded. There is such an unmet need for them. I am familiar with a number of their programs in Queens and they are extremely effective. In spite of not receiving funding from NYC for youth programs, we provide them under two rubrics: *Immigrant Voices and Leading the Way*; *Outstanding Women of Queens*.

Cultural organizations can open new perspectives to youth. We are all cultural in the art sense of the word and cultural, lower case, in the anthropological sense of the word. The cultural

1 organizations, at least in Queens, bring these two
2 human dimensions together and their programs and the
3 Queens Historical Society takes these two and adds a
4 third dimension: history. Thank you for allotting
5 me this time to speak.
6

7 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you all. Thank
8 you. And the last panel. Ingrid Bentil from LINC
9 and City's First Readers; Deana Murtha, Jumpstart
10 City's First Readers; Harriet Lessel, City's First
11 Readers and Caitlin Canfield, City's First Readers
12 VIP and Kristen Aldrich, New York Public Library for
13 City's First Readers. There seems to be a trend
14 here. Laurie Williams, Reach Out and Read of Greater
15 New York and City's First Readers. Okay, so you
16 could all just talk at the same time and... [laughter]
17 I'm only kidding. Please identify; state your name
18 and your organization. I think we know which one
19 that is.

20 INGRID BENTIL: Okay.

21 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: And you can begin your
22 testimony.

23 INGRID BENTIL: Good evening, Madam Chair
24 Rose and Madam Chin. I'm so sorry. I'm a little
25 fuzzy now. Thank you for giving us this opportunity

1 to speak on behalf of City's First Readers. City's
2 First Readers an Early Literacy Initiative. It is a
3 collaboration between 11 non-profit organizations.
4 We are all represented here today and what we do is
5 we foster literacy development of the young children
6 of New York City from ages birth through five. The
7 initiative provides families, early childcare
8 providers and teachers with resources and services
9 needed to ensure that children enter school ready to
10 read and achieve [background noise] educational
11 success. [background voice]

13 Why is City's First Readers necessary?
14 This initiative brings families, children, infants,
15 toddlers, caregivers together to understand the
16 importance of literacy. Did you know that families
17 where parents identify as professional, children
18 entering experienced being read to 1,000 to 1,700
19 hours of read aloud time, compared to the children
20 living in poverty; that number is only 25 hours a
21 year. Disproportionately this affects children of
22 color in New York City and right now two out of three
23 children living in poverty do not read on grade level
24 when they're tested in the 3rd grade. A student
25 living in poverty who can't read on grade level by

3rd grade will not be able to keep up and is 13 times less likely to graduate from high school.

With City Council's support, City's First Readers will continue to offer its effective community-based programs and to help the parents and young children of New York City be prepared to enter school ready to read. City's First Readers is making this a reality. In FY 17 program year, the 11 partners... actually there were 10 partners, served approximately 800,000 families and children in New York City with research proven programs and services offered by the partners across New York City.

We are asking for your renewed and enhanced support and we are respectfully requesting a budget enhancement of \$6 million. Council funding at this level will allow City's First Readers to expand program outcomes and to reach more families citywide; to build a citywide public awareness campaign to connect families and caregivers directly to programs and services and support school readiness; to provide families and caregivers with developmentally appropriate books and to strengthen the infrastructure and data evaluation. [chime]

The science is clear. A robust investment in early childhood literacy programing can help break the cycles of poverty and we ask for your continued support. Thank you.

DEANA MURTHA: Good afternoon. My name is Deana Murtha and I am representing Jumpstart for Young Children, known as Jumpstart and our work as part of City's First Readers Initiative.

Jumpstart is an early childhood education organization with the mission of providing language, literacy and social-emotional programming for preschool children from under-resourced communities and promoting quality early learning for all. We are fueled by one core belief: that providing equal education opportunities to young children contributes to breaking the cycle of poverty. Our program model places highly trained and qualified college students in preschool classrooms to provide a curriculum targeted at improving literacy, language and social-emotional development outcomes, all while working toward our vision of every child entering Kindergarten prepared to succeed.

Jumpstart is thrilled to be part of the City's First Readers Initiative and contributes to

the Initiative's efforts to provide resources and services to help children enter school ready to read and achieve educational success. We provide direct service to preschool children in their classrooms and regularly coordinate and host family and community events, introducing families to our programming and providing participants with literacy building activities that they can then do at home. This year, we've hosted more than 50 events, including many events with the partners from this Initiative and we have several more planned for the rest of the year.

Our program in preschool classrooms is serving over 1,500 children and engages 600 college students from 10 New York City colleges and universities, and these college students deliver our curriculum in 80 preschool classrooms throughout Manhattan, Queens, the Bronx and Brooklyn. During the school year, teams of six to eight college students engage preschool children in group reading, activities and lessons that contribute to the development of skills critical to being prepared for success in Kindergarten and during the summer, we run a summer program to help combat "summer slide" and we

started an extended day program this year in the Bronx.

So Jumpstart and members of the City's First Initiative are working to ensure that each child in New York City has their best childhood possible. We believe that all children deserve to have the education and opportunity to set them on the path for success, from experiencing supportive environment and low child to adult ratios to large scale community events promoting effective reading tips to families and caregivers. Jumpstart and the City's First Readers Initiative partners are building a continuum of services that reach all aspects of a child's life to build a strong foundation in early literacy skills. Support for the Initiative helps to ensure that this valuable work will continue. Additional funding will allow Jumpstart and the Initiative to continue offering our impactful programming throughout the city, as well as provide even more robust community events. Thanks a lot for your support of Jumpstart and the City's First Readers Initiative and for the opportunity [chime] to speak with you.

HARRIET LESSEL: Good afternoon.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Good afternoon.

HARRIET LESSEL: My name is Harriet Lessel and I am the Director of Government Contracts and Advocacy of JCCA. I want to thank the Committee Chair, Council Member Rose and the Committee members for staying and for the opportunity to testify at today's hearing. JCCA is most appreciative of the Council's interest in early literacy and funding of the City's First Readers. So I'm here in support of the City's First Readers Initiative and the request for \$6 million in funding for 2019.

JCCA is fortunate to be one of the newest organizations in the City's First Readers Program and we're the first foster care agency to participate in the Initiative. We've been able to serve the youngest children in foster care in our Brooklyn and Bronx offices. Foster youth are at an even greater disadvantage because they experience trauma, frequently changed homes and changed school; child care.

As part of City's First Readers, JCCA has created literacy rich spaces and there's a picture on the third page in color that I'd like you to see that we utilize during visits with birth and foster

1
2 parents. Children have access to books and over 360
3 have been distributed thus far to children in foster
4 care. We have literacy themed events you know, that
5 connect parents and children and we have our
6 caseworkers identify literacy challenges to connect
7 children and parents with the services of our
8 literacy center.

9 So I'm just going to briefly talk about a
10 family who came into [**inaudible**] JCCA. Both children
11 were placed out of the home, a four year old and a
12 five month old, and when the birth parent would come,
13 she would really struggle with trying to provide
14 equal attention to both of her daughters and often
15 the four year old would end up being placed in time-
16 out so she could you know, spend time with the baby
17 and that workers were having a difficult time
18 providing feedback and suggestions. So they moved
19 their visits to the Early Literacy Center and have
20 really found that the parent has been able to engage
21 in her children in a way that was not possible
22 before. The baby can crawl around and engage with
23 age appropriate toys. The older child now has access
24 to books and puzzles, which she's able to use to show
25 her mom how much she had learned in her new daycare.

1 The parent has become calmer and it's helped her
2 better to appropriately sort of redirect her children
3 and manage their needs. You know, this parent had
4 been resistant to feedback in the past, but in the
5 Literacy Center, staff are really starting to work
6 with her; like they're using literacy as a way to get
7 to some of the parenting issues that they need to
8 address with her, so the kids are enjoying
9 themselves. She noticed the labeling because we have
10 you know, words labeled in English [chime] and
11 Spanish throughout the Center and it's really started
12 to help her really do things in a different way and
13 so this Initiative has enhanced JCCA's work with the
14 youngest children in foster care to improve age
15 appropriate literacy that serves as a foundation for
16 lifelong learning, but also serves as an entry point
17 to engage parents and children in their interaction
18 and communications that will affect family
19 reunification. We're much appreciative and we look
20 forward to continued funding for the Initiative.
21 Thank you so much.

22 CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you.

23 DR. CANFIELD: Hi, I'm Dr. Caitlin
24 Canfield from New York... NYU Langone Health and the
25

1 Video Interaction Project or VIP. So VIP uses
2 Pediatric health care to enhance children's early
3 development and school readiness. Pediatric check-
4 ups are a unique way to reach low-income families
5 because all parents need to bring their children to
6 the doctor and very frequently, as anyone with young
7 children knows, and so that allows programs like VIP
8 and Reach Out and Read, which you'll hear about, to
9 achieve great impacts with very cost.

11 And so in VIP during their pediatric
12 check-ups, families meet with a VIP parent coach, who
13 provides them with a book or a toy that they get to
14 take home. They're videotaped reading or playing
15 together with their child for a few minutes and then
16 the parent coach reviews the video with them to point
17 out and support all of the parent's strengths and the
18 positive things that they're doing in the
19 interaction.

20 Through City's First Readers, these
21 parents are also connected to other literacy programs
22 in their communities. For instance, we've been able
23 to sign families up for library cards right in the
24 pediatric clinic. VIP also empowers parents to be
25 their child's first teachers and rigorous studies

1
2 have shown that children in VIP have improvement in
3 language and problem solving and in behavior that
4 lasts into the early school years and really helps
5 them succeed in school.

6 Our team of researchers at NYU Langone is
7 also currently leading a scientific study of City's
8 First Readers. We've found that using health care to
9 promote literacy through this Initiative has been
10 associated with increased use of the library among
11 parents and together both of those have been
12 associated with parents reading more with their
13 children at home, and this is even before babies are
14 six months old.

15 These findings demonstrate the potential
16 for large impacts across New York City if City's
17 First Readers is expanded and this research is also
18 part of the National Bridging the Word Research
19 Network and it was featured at the National Meeting
20 of the Pediatric Academic Societies, which has made
21 City's First Readers and New York a model for cities
22 around the country who are prioritizing investment in
23 young children and in fact, we've had several
24 colleagues approach us asking us more about the
25 Initiative and how they replicate it in their cities.

1
2 The program has also been endorsed by the American
3 Academy of Pediatrics because of its potential to
4 enhance the health of children, of parents and of
5 families and it's vital that City's First Readers
6 really continues to grow.

7 Increased funding next year will allow us
8 to reach more children and families, increasing
9 impacts for our youngest New Yorkers. So I want to
10 thank the Council for your support of this Initiative
11 and for the opportunity to speak today.

12 KRISTEN ALDRICH: Hi, good afternoon. My
13 name is Kristen Rachel [phonetic] Alrich. I am the
14 Manager of Early Childhood Education at the New York
15 Public Library, and I am here today representing all
16 three library systems in New York City and we are
17 truly grateful for City Council's generous support of
18 City's First Readers and the continual increase in
19 funding.

20 Each year, New York Public Library,
21 Brooklyn Public Library and Queens Library offer
22 Neighborhood Early Literacy programs with an annual
23 attendance over half a million. As part of the
24 City's First Readers, each library system is
25 developing and expanding its own Early Literacy

services. Here are a few highlights: New York Public Library has distributed over 105,000 Early Literacy outreach kits to encourage families to read at home and that includes a board book and a growth chart and a resource list for families, and we've also expanded our Family Literacy Workshops to 87 of our library branches. Queens Public Library expanded their play spaces into three new branches this past year. They were also able to hire one more Early Literacy Specialist to assist families in their communities and to engage with literacy rich materials. Brooklyn Public Library is offering a credit bearing Early Childhood Educator Series on diversity, equity and inclusion and connecting teachers with vital Early Literacy resources to enrich their classrooms.

Here with everyone sitting at this table are a few examples of how this Initiative has allowed us to collaborate with our other program partners, who we are extremely grateful to have. Parent-Child Home Program, who you heard from earlier today, has worked with Queens Library to provide their families a closer interaction with the library's Pre-K program in Ravenswood. They've cohosted programs at their

1 school to introduce families to all that the library
2 can offer them. [background noise] Jumpstart, who
3 you also just heard from, partnered with Brooklyn
4 Public Library to offer programs at the New Lots
5 Library to promote home learning and school
6 readiness, and Reach Out and Read, who you will hear
7 from in a minute, where our medical providers work
8 with the library medical providers prescribing
9 reading and going to the library.
10

11 With \$6 million in support of City's
12 First Readers, this vitally important work will only
13 grow in New York City's libraries. We could support
14 and train family child care providers, expand
15 specialized family learning opportunities, grow
16 school readiness activities, distribute more Early
17 Literacy outreach kits and provide more baby and
18 toddler literacy development programs and locations
19 across the city.

20 In the spirit of the three systems
21 working together, along with City's First Readers to
22 support this important initiative, we need the Mayor
23 and City Council to keep investing in libraries so we
24 can continue to provide the programs and services all
25 New Yorkers deserve. [chime] That means continuing

1
2 to fund 6-day service at all locations and the care
3 and keeping of our branches system-wide, which have
4 critical maintenance and technology infrastructure
5 needs. The library is the first social interaction
6 many new families have and we want it to be the most
7 enriching experience possible, regardless of
8 background, demographic or means. Thank you so much.
9 [background noise]

10 LAURIE WILLIAMS: Hi, good afternoon. My
11 name is Laurie Williams and I'm representing Reach
12 Out and Read of Greater New York, where I serve as
13 the Executive Director. I want to take first the
14 opportunity to thank Chair Rose, Council Member Chin
15 and the City Council for your commitment to ensure
16 that every child in New York City will begin school
17 with the literacy skills that enable him or her to
18 succeed. It means a lot to everyone on this panel
19 and to New York City, so thank you.

20 As part of the City's First Readers
21 Initiative and partnership, this ongoing city support
22 has been invaluable, but there's still much work to
23 be done. Consider that by age three, children from
24 high-income families are exposed to 30 million more
25 words than children from low-income communities.

1 This disparity is reflective of unacceptable
2 inequalities. It's inequalities of access to
3 resources that have profound implications for our
4 children in school and beyond.

5
6 For the past two decades, Reach Out and
7 Read has been working to ensure that children all
8 across New York have the resources to develop a
9 strong foundation for lifelong success. Our program
10 takes advantage of the unique access to pediatric
11 primary care and those providers that they have to
12 children who are in their critical years of cognitive
13 and language development. We provide doctors and
14 medical staff with training and resources to help
15 them become a child's first reading role model.
16 Medical providers that we work with read with
17 children as part of routine well-child visits and
18 help parents and other family members understand the
19 critical importance of reading aloud to their
20 children regularly, and because so many of the
21 families we work with just don't have access to
22 resources to buy books, children are given books to
23 take home that are both developmentally and
24 culturally appropriate. The book is the springboard
25 to action, a seed of literature that will germinate

as families, encouraged and informed by our physicians, make reading a part of everyday life. Without this critical first step before children even enter school, the obstacles that our city's children face can be insurmountable.

Annually, Reach Out and Read serves about 275,000 children and families and 167 hospitals and clinics across New York. Funding from the City Council has helped us provide Early Literacy services in 43 of the 51 City Council Districts. Despite impressive efforts made possible by City's First Readers, we still feel there's so much more to be done and the fact that we have the synergy of this partnership and what we've done in terms of providing in many ways a continuum of services, where we partner with each one of the folks here, we just feel like it's created something very special and there's been research that's sort of beginning to show the efficacy of this incredible partnership.

We hope that you will consider the \$6 million support [chime] for this year because we feel like there's still so much more to do and we are incredibly grateful for your compassion and interest and care. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON ROSE: Thank you. I want to thank all of you for what you do because reading is not only fundamental, but I think it's foundational and so for what you do on getting our young people a good start; a good foundation I want to thank you, and I want to thank the administration for staying and hearing all of the important testimony, and I want to thank all of you who came and participated today. It's important that your voice is heard. I do truly believe that the squeaky wheel gets oil and I'm glad that you came to share with us your budget concerns for the Youth Committee and I want to thank you for what all of you are doing for youth development because you truly are preparing you know, our future. So I want to thank you all for being here. I want to thank my colleague, Margaret Chin, for hanging in 'til the bitter end and of course, the wonderful staff that we have here, Jessica Ackerman and Paul Sinegal. I want to thank you all and this meeting is adjourned at 10 to 6. Thank you so much.

[gavel]

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COMMITTEE ON YOUTH SERVICES

182

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 April 20, 2018