

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS

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December 18, 2019

Start: 11:23 AM

Recess: 11:32 AM

HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Room  
16<sup>th</sup> Fl.

B E F O R E: ROBERT E. CORNEGY, JR.  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Fernando Cabrera  
Margaret S. Chin  
Rafael L. Espinal, Jr.  
Mark Gjonaj  
Barry S. Grodenchik  
Farah N. Louis  
Bill Perkins  
Carlina Rivera  
Helen K. Rosenthal  
Ritchie J. Torres

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

2 (sound check) (pause) (gavel)

3 CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: Good morning

4 everyone and thank you for coming. I'm Council

5 Member Robert Cornegy, Chair of the Council's

6 Committee on Housing and Buildings. We're here to

7 hold a vote on Proposed Intro No. 948-A, a bill

8 related to heat sensors in certain multiple

9 dwellings, and Proposed Intro No. 1211-A, a bill

10 related to Homeless set asides in certain housing

11 development projects. First, we'll vote on Proposed

12 Intro 948-A sponsored by Council Member Torres. The

13 New York City Housing Maintenance Code requires

14 building owners to maintain certain minimum indoor

15 temperatures from October 1<sup>st</sup> through May 31<sup>st</sup>. It's

16 not always clear, however, whether building owners

17 are properly complying with these requirements.

18 Those who repeated violate heat requirements should

19 be held accountable and subject to greater inspection

20 by the Department of Housing Preservation and

21 Development. This bill will required HPD to identify

22 the top 50 worst violations of the code's heat

23 requirements. Owners of these 50 buildings would be

24 required to install Internet capable temperature

25 reporting devices in each dwelling unit to help

1 monitor indoor air temperatures. This bill would  
2 also require HPD to inspect these 50 buildings at  
3 least once every two weeks to ensure compliance.  
4 Second, we'll vote on Proposed Intro 1211-A,  
5 sponsored by Council Member Salamanca. Each night  
6 many homeless individuals and families sleep in the  
7 city's shelter systems, and many others on the  
8 streets in the subway system and other public spaces.  
9 Research shows that the primary cause of homelessness  
10 especially for families is a lack of affordable  
11 housing. This bill would require developers who  
12 receive city financial assistance for new  
13 construction to set aside at least 15% of rental  
14 units for homeless individuals and families. This  
15 bill would apply only to new construction of multiple  
16 dwellings subject to a regulatory agreement with a  
17 the Federal, State or local government agency, and  
18 with at least 41 new units offered for rent. I'm  
19 joined today by Council Members Louis, Chin, Rivera,  
20 Salamanca, Perkins, Grodenchik, and Torres. We'll  
21 hear from Council Member Salamanca sponsor of  
22 Proposed Intro No. 1211-A on his bill.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER SALAMANCA: Thank you,  
25 Chair Cornegy and members of the Committee on Housing

1 and Buildings for letting me speak today. Last  
2 October I introduced Intro 1211 because it was clear  
3 to me then that we were experiencing a homeless  
4 crisis unlike anything we have ever seen. Despite  
5 initiative after initiative from past  
6 administrations, the shelter population has risen  
7 from 35,000 people in 2008 to 63,000 by 2018. A  
8 report by the Coalition for the Homeless at the time  
9 declared homelessness in New York City had reached  
10 the highest level since the Great Depression. As I  
11 work with advocates to gain support for Intro 1211, I  
12 met with those who experienced life in shelters on a  
13 daily basis. It was very apparent that we need a bold  
14 citywide policy to address an issue that has reached  
15 a critical juncture. In January of this year, we  
16 reached a record number of individuals living in  
17 shelter. 63,839. Contrary to the stigma surrounding  
18 shelters, the faces of homelessness reflects families  
19 struggling to keep up with rising rents and the  
20 stagnant wages. Families make up more than two-  
21 thirds of the homeless shelter population while  
22 school age children account for an overwhelming  
23 percentage of those living in shelter. This morning,  
24 over 22,000 children got ready for school in a New  
25

2 York City shelter. Let that sink in. While I've  
3 been instituting a 15% set-aside in my own district  
4 over the last year and a half, creating over 121  
5 units for homeless individuals, and families in that  
6 time, what we need is a citywide policy on a project  
7 by project basis. Homeless is an issue that affects  
8 constituents in all of our districts. If we are  
9 truly going to do our part, it starts today. Today,  
10 we have the opportunity to vote on legislation that  
11 will tackle both the housing crisis and the  
12 homelessness crisis. We face a predicament of record  
13 numbers of people in shelters because there has been  
14 a lack of permanent solutions to address the issue on  
15 hand. Intro 1211 gives us a path forward to creating  
16 what advocates, shelter residents and people within  
17 the administration have been calling for, thousands  
18 of new permanent housing for the homeless. Intro  
19 1211 has earned the endorsement of the House, our  
20 family future campaign, Speaker Johnson, Comptroller  
21 Scott Stringer, Public Advocate Jumaane Williams and  
22 37 colleagues in the City Council including a major-a  
23 majority of the members on this committee. I urge  
24 you to stand with homeless advocates and the 62,000  
25 people who call the New York—who call New York

2 shelters home and vote in favor of Intro 1211, and I  
3 will be remiss if I don't give a big shout-out to my  
4 team, Brian Hadie (sp?) for really helping me with  
5 this, and, you know, Coalition for the Homeless to  
6 sell and also Vocal New York because they really  
7 helped get this to the finish line with Speaker  
8 Johnson. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

9 CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: Thank you so much  
10 Council Member Salamanca and congratulations. I will  
11 now hear from Council Member Ritchie Torres on his  
12 bill.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: Thank you, Mr.  
14 Chairman. I'm grateful for the opportunity to vote  
15 on Intro 948, which I see as a real breakthrough in  
16 modernizing Housing Code Enforcement. During the  
17 heating season there's no housing condition about  
18 which we receive more complaints than the loss of  
19 heat and hot water both in private and public  
20 housing. Under my legislation instead of waiting for  
21 311 calls, HPD will proactively, will conduct  
22 proactive bi-weekly inspections in buildings that  
23 have the highest number of heat and hot water  
24 complaints, and will require heat sensors in  
25 buildings that have the highest number of heat and

2 hot water violations. So, HPD through these heat  
3 sensors will have the ability to monitor heat and hot  
4 water levels in real time. I think this is a real  
5 breakthrough in modernizing Housing Code enforcement  
6 and making it more tech savvy and making it more  
7 proactive rather than reactive, and I'm excited that  
8 the City Council is going to vote it into law.

9 CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: Having—this is  
10 actually one of those days that make me incredibly  
11 proud to be New York City Council Member, but really  
12 proud to be the Chair of a committee that has such—so  
13 much bold and timely legislation. You know, often  
14 times, you know, it's joked that we don't do much  
15 here at the City Council, but really to improve the  
16 lives of some of the most least fortunate in our city  
17 through legislation is what we get up every day to  
18 do. So, I want to congratulate my colleagues on this  
19 great legislation, and I'm—I'm ready to call the  
20 roll. So, Billy Martin, if you call the roll so I  
21 can proudly vote aye.

22 CLERK: William Martin, Committee Clerk,  
23 roll call vote Committee on Housing and Buildings.  
24 The items are coupled. Chair Cornegy.

25 CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: I proudly vote aye.



2 CLERK: Chin.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Permission to  
4 explain my vote.

5 CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: Go ahead.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: I also want to  
7 express my gratitude on these legislations, and I  
8 agree with my colleagues that Council Member Torres,  
9 you know, that the heat and hot water complaint is  
10 such a big issue in my district, and that we're  
11 taking a bold step, and in terms of really  
12 modernizing how HPD can really help solve these  
13 problems, and congratulations to Council Member  
14 Salamanca. We have to solve this homeless crisis,  
15 and they need permanent housing, the children need  
16 permanent housing, and this is a bold step, and I  
17 congratulate you and thank you to all the advocates  
18 and I proudly vote aye also. Thank you.

19 CLERK: Torres.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: I vote aye and  
21 holding the Grinches accountable so (laughter)

22 CLERK: Grodenchik.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER GRODENCHIK: Aye.

24 CLERK: Perkins.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER PERKINS: Aye and I would  
3 like to thank my teams and mystics who were  
4 supporters of the legislation.

5 CLERK: Rivera.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Congratulations  
7 to my colleagues. I proudly vote aye.

8 CLERK: Louis.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER LOUIS: I also want to  
10 congratulate my colleagues on these two great pieces  
11 of legislation, and look forward to seeing so much  
12 more. I proudly vote aye.

13 CLERK: By a vote of 7 in the  
14 affirmative, zero in the negative and no abstentions,  
15 both items have been adopted by the committee.

16 CHAIRPERSON CORNEGY: This, um, this  
17 hearing on Housing and Buildings is closed? I am  
18 currently opening up the roll to allow for Rafael  
19 Espinal to vote.

20 CLERK: Introduction 948-1 and 1211-A.  
21 Council Member Espinal.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER ESPINAL: I want to thank  
23 the Chair for his amazing leadership in getting these  
24 bills passed and allowing me the opportunity to come  
25 here and vote.

2 CLERK: Final vote on these two items are  
3 now 8 in the affirmative, zero in the negative and no  
4 abstentions.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date December 30, 2019