

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

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OCTOBER 15, 2020
Start: 9:37 A.M.
Recess: 9:47 A.M.

HELD AT: REMOTE HEARING

B E F O R E: YDANIS RODRIGUEZ, CHAIRPERSON

COUNCIL MEMBERS: FERNANDO CABRERA
ANDREW COHEN
CHAIM M. DEUTSCH
RUBEN DIAZ, SR.
ROBERT F. HOLDEN
PETER A. KOO
STEPHEN T. LEVIN
MARK LEVINE
CARLOS MENCHACA
I. DANEEK MILLER
ANTONIO REYNOSO
DONOVAN J. RICHARDS
DEBORAH L. ROSE

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

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2 COREY JOHNSON: Okay Sargeants, if you
3 would begin your recordings?

4 SARGEANT SADOWSKI: Back up is rolling.

5 SARGEANT AT ARMS 1: Live is good as
6 well.

7 COREY JOHNSON: Mr. Sargeant Sadowski, I
8 will leave it to you.

9 SARGEANT SADOWSKI: Thank you. Good
10 morning and welcome to today's remote New York City
11 Council Hearing on the Committee on Transportation.
12 At this time, would all Council Members and staff
13 please turn on their video. To minimize disruption,
14 please place electronic devices on vibrate or silent
15 mode. Thank you and we are ready to begin.

16 CHAIRPERSON YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Good
17 morning and welcome to today's hearing of the City
18 Council's Transportation Committee. I am Ydanis
19 Rodriguez, the chair of this committee and as most of
20 you know New York's Licensed Taxi industry has been
21 in turmoil over the last several years, medallion
22 businesses have closed and driver cliental decline
23 but after took advantage and prayed on our owners and
24 drivers, native born immigrants we pray that the
25 lending practices that make it unable to make end

2 meat or realistically manage their debt. Foreclosure
3 and bankruptcy became the norm for many. We need to
4 do more for taxi drivers, especially the 6,000
5 individual medallion owners and all sakes of the
6 drivers who need a little help, many of whom have
7 lost everything because of COVID-19. We need to be
8 thinking outside the box and explore solutions that
9 will help all drivers. Today, the committee convenes
10 remotely to vote on the filing three pieces of
11 Legislation pertaining to the yellow taxi industry in
12 the City. Proposing for #1584-A introduced by
13 Council Member Adams is a local law to amend
14 administrative code on the City of New York in
15 relation to requiring annual financial disclosure for
16 any person who has any interest in a taxi cab
17 license. Proposed Intro 1608-A which I have
18 sponsored to local law to amend the administrative
19 code on the City of New York in relation to
20 requirement taxi and limousine commission. So, by
21 the way, the character and integrity of taxicab
22 brokers, agents and taxicab license and Proposed
23 Intro 1610-A introduced by Council Member Torres is a
24 local law to amend administrative code on the City of
25 New York in relation to the creation of an Office of

2 Financial Stability within the Taxi and Limousine
3 Commission. The bills that we will be voting on
4 today are made to ensure that TLC is properly
5 overseeing the taxi industry and making sure that no
6 actor is able to enter the yellow taxi medallion
7 market. Before I ask the clerk to call the roll
8 call, let me, let the Council to recognize the
9 colleagues who are here with us today.

10 COREY JOHNSON: Excuse me, Members
11 Cabrera, Deutsch, Diaz, Holden, Koo, Levin, Menchaca
12 and Council Member Rose.

13 CHAIRPERSON YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Thank you,
14 thank you and now I will ask the Committee Clerk to
15 conduct a roll call vote on the three bills and
16 record and I recommend my colleagues to vote yes on
17 three important pieces of Legislation.

18 COREY JOHNSON: Uhm, Chair, we have a
19 statement from Council Members Adams.

20 CHAIRPERSON YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Sorry,
21 Council Member Adams could not be here but one of our
22 team is going to be reading her statement.

23 COREY JOHNSON: The following is a
24 statement from Council Member Adams on Introduction
25 1584. Good afternoon, I would like to start by

2 thanking Chair Rodriguez for his willingness to
3 deliver these comments on Intro 1584 on my behalf.
4 Over the past few years, we have all become aware of
5 the struggle and overwhelming debt of Taxi Medallion
6 owners. Taxi Medallions have become a money pit for
7 thousands of drivers. It is time that we mandate
8 this recording to get a handle on this unregulated
9 sector that has allowed unscrupulous people to
10 exploit hard-working drivers. Intro 1584 will help
11 to weed out bad actors and give way to the other site
12 that should have been in place all along. I ask my
13 colleagues to support this valuable Legislation.
14 Sincerely Council Member Adrienne Adams.

15 CHAIRPERSON YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Thank you
16 and now I would like for the Clerk to please call the
17 roll.

18 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK: Good
19 morning, William Martin, Committee Clerk, roll call
20 vote for Committee on Transportation. All three items
21 are coupled. Chair Rodriguez?

22 CHAIRPERSON YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Aye.

23 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK:
24 Cabrera?

25 FERNANDO CABRERA: Aye.

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2 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK: Thank
3 you. Cohen?

4 ANDREW COHEN: Permission to briefly to
5 just briefly explain my vote?

6 CHAIRPERSON YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Permission
7 granted.

8 ANDREW COHEN: Thank you Chair, I really
9 am pleased to vote on these bills. I think that we
10 all share a frustration that we have not been able to
11 really fully alleviate the situation that the
12 drivers, now essential workers, people who work so
13 hard to help us get around the City have been going
14 through and I think that these bills will give us the
15 essential data that we need ultimately to maybe try
16 to come up with more permanent and systemic solutions
17 to the challenges and problems that we face. So, I
18 am very pleased with that to vote aye on all.

19 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK: Thank
20 you. Deutsch?

21 CHAIM DEUTSCH: Aye.

22 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK: Koo?

23 PETER KOO: Aye.

24 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK: Levin?

25 STEPHEN LEVIN: Aye.

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2 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK:

3 Menchaca?

4 CARLOS MENCHACA: Aye.

5 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK:

6 Permission to explain my vote?

7 CHAIRPERSON YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Permission
8 granted.

9 CARLOS MENCHACA: Thank you Chair, I just
10 want to echo the sentiment of Council Member Andy
11 Cohen, we have been doing a lot of banding work on an
12 industry that needs systemic change and I do believe
13 that this Legislation and the information we will be
14 receiving from this Legislation will help us do that,
15 so I am really excited to start getting down to the
16 nitty gritty and the details that will finally get us
17 to completely reforming the way TLC does work and
18 helping these drivers who have done so much during
19 this pandemic, so I vote aye on all. Thank you.

20 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK: Miller?

21 DANEEK MILLER: Aye.

22 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK: Thank

23 you sir. Reynoso? Excuse me, I called already.

24 Excuse me.

25

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2 ANTONIO REYNOSO: I could vote twice if
3 you want me to Clerk.

4 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK: I
5 gotcha. My apologies. Rose?

6 DEBORAH ROSE: Aye.

7 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK: Diaz?

8 RUBEN DIAZ: Aye.

9 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK: Holden?

10 ROBERT HOLDEN: Aye.

11 UNIDENTIFIED: SPEAKING FOREIGN LANGUAGE.

12 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK: Okay by
13 a vote 12 in the affirmative, 0 in the negative and
14 no extensions all items have been adopted by the
15 Committee. Thank you.

16 DEBORAH ROSE: Billy, can we keep the vote
17 open for one member that is trying to log on.

18 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK: Sure.

19 DEBORAH ROSE: Hold on one second, thank
20 you. Billy, can you call on Council Member Levine?

21 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK:
22 Absolutely, Council Member Levine?

23 MARK LEVINE: Thank you, I vote aye on
24 all.

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2 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK: The
3 vote is now at 13 in the affirmative, 0 in the
4 negative and no abstentions.

5 CHAIRPERSON YDANIS RODRIGUEZ: Thank you
6 and Bill and I would like to invite everyone to
7 please join us tomorrow in the Transportation hearing
8 that we have at 2 p.m. where we will have the
9 Commissioner TLC coming in front of this committee
10 and we will hear how TLC has been working during this
11 pandemic supporting their drivers, what is going on
12 with the Driver Resource Center and so on the Bills
13 that we would like to take that in. I think it is
14 important. By the end of the day, they drivers they
15 don't need more data, they driver needs a plan of
16 action and we now that after the coronavirus and we
17 also know that one other recommendation that we put
18 for the Medallion Task Force who asks the City to
19 work with different sectors to create a financial
20 assistance to the medallion owners. I feel that even
21 though we understand we are going through a tough
22 time, our budget is similar to one that we had in
23 2011 but I feel also that this is one of the sectors
24 that I hope that the guide that we have that those
25 that represent our City will be changed very soon so

2 that we can give financial support that we need to
3 the City and also to be in a better position to
4 financially support this industry, especially the
5 medallion owners, particularly the 6,000 individual
6 medallion owners. With that, this hearing is
7 adjourned.

8 SARGEANT: Okay Chair, we are off of live
9 and Council Member Cabrera, can you please stay
10 logged on for Housing and Buildings? We are good
11 here chair, thank you.

12 FERNANDO CABRERA: You said to stay
13 logged on for Buildings?

14 SARGEANT: Yes.

15 FERNANDO CABRERA: Okay, thank you.

16 SARGEANT: Thank you.

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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 November 4, 2020