QUADRENNIAL COMMISSION ON
COMPENSATION OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

NOVEMBER 23, 2015
5:10 P.M.
BROOKLYN LAW SCHOOL
250 JORALEMON STREET
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11201

BEFORE:
Fritz Schwarz, Chairperson
Jill Bright
Paul Quintero
Jeff Friedlander
Kyle Alagood, Research Director

SPEAKERS:
Dick Dadey, Executive Director, Citizens Union
Roxanne Delgado, Public Advocate
Gene Russianoff, NYPIRG
Josefina Sanfeliu, Public Advocate
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MR. SCHWARZ: Our first witness is here, and
I have a couple of opening remarks before you
start.

MR. DADEY: Do you want me to sit down?

MR. SCHWARZ: Whatever you like.

MR. DADEY: Then it's clear that you've got
the floor, and I'll sit down.

MR. SCHWARZ: So, welcome to this hearing.

We're holding this hearing intentionally in
Brooklyn, and tomorrow in Queens, because we
believe that doing the public business we should
be in the places where the most people are.

That means we can't be in every location,
and I know we're going to talk about that with
another witness who wrote us a very good letter.

MR. DADEY: Thank you.

MR. SCHWARZ: But we've chosen to be here
intentionally because Brooklyn and Queens are the
two most populist boroughs.

We have been trying to be transparent and
open, which other commissions before us have not
been. And -- I've got this mic.

A PARTICIPANT: It's not working. That one
is working. The one you were using is not
working.
MR. SCHWARZ: Oh, that means I must have a loud voice.

We are choosing to be transparent and open, which -- and that was our threshold decision when we first met, which other Quadrennial Commissions have not been. The benefit of being open is both to the public and to us.

The benefit to the public is obvious. Why should the public wait until a Quadrennial Commission's report comes out to learn that particular public officials or groups of public officials had made proposals? Why shouldn't those proposals be out, so that the public can react to them? And why should the public have to wait until the Commission's report is published, for the public to get an insight into what research we are doing. That helps the public.

Having things in the public helps us, too, because if you get reactions to what you're doing, or what other people have proposed, it informs our thinking. So, it's good for both the public and for the Commission to be open.

Now, at this hearing, it's obvious that there is not a crowd prepared to testify. That is too bad. It's a pity that there aren't more
people here. It's a pity that elected officials aren't here -- not because we want to hear what they think, or they would like to advocate what they should be paid. That's relevant, but it's really not why, I think, there's a benefit to having public officials come to the hearing.

The benefit is so that we can have an opportunity to discuss with public officials what they do and how what they do has changed, both of which are relevant to our work.

So, with those opening comments, let me turn the floor over to the dais. And I want to say one other thing. We are going to, I believe, ask questions and engage in dialogue with the witnesses. One, because frankly that's more fun for both us and the witness, but more than it being more fun, and more importantly, if you engage in dialogue, you can discover things, learn things, test ideas, and that is healthy for an open process.

Don't judge anything about what we are thinking. And, by the way, we are still thinking. We have not decided anything yet.

Don't judge anything about what we're thinking from the nature of the question. Like with the,
with the Supreme Court, the questions are
designed to elicit information, not to present
positions. And I know, myself, for example, I
might ask a question that looks as if it's going
in one direction, when my mind, in fact, is on
the opposite side of the question. So, don't
judge, and I assume that Jill and Paul will do
the same.

And I should say, we have here up on with
Jill Bright, fellow Commissioner, Paul Quintero,
fellow Commissioner, Jeff Friedlander, our
counsel, and Kyle Alagood, our director of
research.

So, Mr. Dadey.

MR. DADEY: Well, thank you very much.

Good evening. Commissioners Bright and
General Schwarz, my name is Dick Dadey, Executive
Director of Citizens Union, and I think you all
know that Citizens Union is New York's oldest
non-partisan good governing group that is making
democracy work for all New Yorkers.

We serve as a civic watchdog to ban
corruption in fighting for political reform.

Now, I thank you for the excellent way you
have approached your responsibilities as members
of this commission in creating a transparent process, a more transparent process than we have ever seen before any of these commissions, and also a real commitment to engaging the public as best you can. As well as, I want to thank you for your public service.

It's been eight years since this issue was looked at. This issue should have been looked at four years ago, as is required, or directed to under the City Charter. Given the fact that it has not happened in eight years, and given the size of the City of New York's budget, the demanding responsibilities placed upon our elected officials to manage was increasing a complex operation of city government, with a budget now of $73 billion, and the myriad of constituent services that need to be provided. The offices of these elected officials, charged with protecting the public trust and serving the public trust, need to be well-compensated. It's in the public's interest to ensure that we have a well-compensated elected official group. If we do have that, then we are going to be able to attract individuals to public life who are talented, committed and well-qualified to carry
out their jobs as successfully as they can.

Because let's face it, a lot of -- when people make decisions about their careers is based upon their ability to afford, to make a salary that provides for their family and for their interests and their needs.

Given that our elected officials have not received a salary increase since 2006, there are strong reasons for them to receive one now. But it should not be the sole basis upon which this commission makes its recommendation.

Keep in mind that our 64 elected officials, who were elected in 2013, or 2015, 15, new full well at the time that they were elected that their salary was set for a four-year term. To claim that they have not received a raise in eight years, as some have, is a red herring, since only 27 of them have held office for more than one term. 22 were first elected to their post just two years ago. So, arguments that they deserve a raise because they have not received a raise, or the position has not received a raise in eight years, does not apply to large portion of the current City Council.

MR. SCHWARZ: Can I ask you a question about
that? On your point about "knew full well" -- by the way you could make your point even stronger by saying only District Attorney Brown has served in office for a long time, among all the 64 city officials, elected officials, but when you focus it on what was the state of mind of particular officials when they were elected, um, I have two questions about that.

One is that wouldn't the state of mind of people when they were elected be that there will be a charter commission appropriately soon. But more fundamental than that, um, it seems to me that our job is not to think about individual elected officials, but to think about the office, and the office has not, offices have not had a raise for nine years. How that, you know, counts is a different question, but I think conceptually, I would ask you about those two nuances.

MR. DADEY: I mean, I think you're exactly right, Commissioner Schwarz, that that is where the when should be, you know, not on the individual office holders, but rather on the office itself, and the office has not received a raise in eight years.
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But for individual office holders to stake a claim that they deserve a raise, not that the office, I think, is something that doesn't serve the public's interest as all, nor their interests either. And sure they entered public life, or they entered this recent term, maybe hoping for a raise, as would have been required, but it has not always happened. I mean, there have been many commissions that should have been formed and met and recommended an increase, and it did not happen.

So, if I was running for elected office, um, I would go into it with the mind that this is going to be my salary for the next four years. And that if I was an elected official who truly cared about serving the public interest, I would not be seen as having my hand up for my own self-interest.

MR. SCHWARZ: Well, I think that's certainly a valid consideration, and it might be why elected officials choose not to come to testify. That's a speculation about --

MR. DADEY: And I'm just checking to see if anyone walked in since.

MR. SCHWARZ: -- the nature of it. It could
be the reason for it. But if we agree that the issue is the office and not the person, I think it presents a question that's more subtle.

MR. DADEY: Yes. And this, I mean, this actually leads to my next point, or next series of points, if I can go on. Do you mind?

On page 2 of our testimony you will see -- I realize that people want copies of my testimony. I'll hand this out. I'm sure some members of the City Council senior staff would love to see what's in the form here. Two gentlemen who really do serve the public interest and we're very fortunate to work with them.

But as we look at this issue of raising the compensation, you know, under the current provision Administrative Code, though it was not followed as it should have been in 2003, 2007, 2011, you know, members, members of the council have been, and continue to be placed in the undesirable position of having to vote on recommendations to raise their own salaries while serving in their current term in office. It doesn't happen in the State Legislature, it doesn't happen in Congress, and it shouldn't happen here. But we know that when the process
was first established nearly 28 years ago, I mean, the intent of the present structure was to schedule the work of the Commission as far away as possible from the election, so that it is less likely that a vote on the proposal would become a major campaign issue.

However, we believe philosophically at Citizens Union, that currently serving council members should not vote themselves a raise, and that the structure of the system that puts them in that position needs to be changed. It's a position we put forward back in 2006. It's a position that we hold today.

In fact, 37 current City Council members, 37 of the 51 Council Members agree with us. When they answered a Citizen Union's candidate questionnaire over the last ten years, 37 of them, who are in office currently, said in response that they supported our proposal that any future increase in Council member salary only applied prospectively to the next elected class, a change which was also supported by Mayor DeBlasio. And if you want to take a look at who said what, take a look at the chart in the back, and you will see a listing of all 51 City Council
members and where they stand, not only on the position of making the salary increases prospective, but also on this issue of banning committee chair LULUs.

MR. SCHWARZ: Well, let's hold the LULUs for a minute.

And Paul and Jill, on the issue that Dick raised before we mentioned LULUs, holding any raise until January 1st, 2018, do you guys, either of you, have a question on that subject?

MS. BRIGHT: Well, I think the only comment I would have is that the Commission will make a recommendation, and that recommendation may be to enact compensation changes immediately, or it could possibly be for the next election cycle.

But we would say that the Commission is established as an independent group to make whatever recommendations it feels is appropriate.

So, I hear you and what you, you know, you would charge us to give greater consideration to, but I think that has to be open to the Commission --

MR. DADEY: Most definitely it's your decision. I would just urge you not to continue to allow the self-dealing that is currently in
the --

MR. SCHWARZ: Well, now, I have one or two comments.

Assuming that you used the word philosophy, and assuming that one agrees with your philosophy, and, indeed, one could say your philosophy is the same one that was presented by James Madison in 1798 when he proposed precisely that idea as a part of the Bill of Rights, it didn't happen until 200 years later, because it took that long for the requisite number of states to ratify.

But even if one agrees with the philosophy on that subject -- let's assume one did agree with the philosophy on that subject, and I'm not commenting on that one way or another.

But wouldn't, for that item, it be preferable to have it as a proposal that the law should be changed, and change which I think you said either in piece or your one from several years ago, that the law should be changed to change the date, the timing of a Quadrennial Commission so it's not in the first month of the second year, but is sometime in the fourth year, and then you would have better synchrocity...
between Commission proposals and your philosophical idea, which has a lot of force to it.

MR. DADEY: Right. Correct. And it's a point well made and taken. But I think, you know, we also have to look at this through the lens of the taxpayers and the residents of this city who elect our elected officials on the hope that they will serve the public interest and that they're not there to serve their own individual interests. And putting the Council members in a predicament of having to raise their salaries, while they're in office, just flies in the face of what should not be, which flies in the face of something that should not be done.

You have this opportunity to actually come out with your recommendations and change a process that has been flawed for 28 years. We know that once this issue fades from view, after you make your recommendation and the Council votes on it and the Mayor signs it, if that happens, this won't be discussed for another four or eight years.

If you look at your, at the previous Commission, the Commission identified, in 2006,
as an issue that should be handled and tackled,
and it hasn't been. And these things only happen
when there is a moment of opportunity.

This is that moment of opportunity. And you
can even serve the public interest on a greater
level by removing that responsibility from them
having to vote themselves a raise until the
following term in office.

MR. QUINTERO: I want to take that idea one
step further, I'm clear on the recommendation of
not voting in their terms. But in the other
testimony to be received, there's another notion
of, let's just say for the sake of argument that
it is in the future term. What's your
perspective on some benchmark for increases
yearly thereafter, because of this point that you
just made where there's a lot of variability on
when the Quadrennial Commission meets; and,
therefore, often this catch-up is done.

We received some testimony suggesting that,
and I'd love to get your perspective.

MR. DADEY: We would not support that, and
we would not support it because, again, public
service is arguably a calling. This is not,
you're not signing up to become a civil service
employee. You're not being signed up to work in
government for the rest of your life. This is a
public service. You need to set the example by
leading by example. And to kind of come across
as like me, too, that everybody else in
government is being treated like this, then we
should be, too, I think, just kind of, I think,
undervalues the prestige, you know, the entire
notion of what an elected official should
embrace.

Elected officials are different. And they
should be treated differently. We hold them to a
very high standard. They have to make some very
difficult decisions on behalf of their
constituents and on behalf of the City, and they
should be well-compensated, but we should not
place them in the position of having to self-deal
and vote a raise for themselves.

MR. QUINTERO: You mentioned we're
compensated twice, and I think that's something
I'd like to build on.

Given the unique role that electeds play,
that you just shared, one of the challenges we
have as a commission is what's the right
benchmark.
And the civil servants and employees and the folks that are in the government structure aren't comparable, and you've seen what we've been looking at.

Could you share your thoughts on the benchmark that you would think that the Union would make the most on, or that you feel are more relevant, because of the role that we share?

MR. DADEY: Sure. The role of the City Council member has been increased dramatically, and started with someone else who's sitting at this table who's chaired a Charter Revision Commission and reshaped our city government all for the better.

But, you know, power, the use of power and the exercise of power is an interesting thing.

You can have responsibilities laid out, and it really depends upon the office holder as to how he or she takes on those responsibilities and uses power.

We have seen, I think, since -- I'm probably getting off on a tangent here -- but we've seen, given the very good structure that was established, you know, 25 years, 30 years ago.

MR. DADEY: 26. Okay. Thank you. That, you know, we wanted a strong mayoral form of government. But I bet it's far stronger than I think some of the people would have thought, and we need to find ways in which to strengthen the role of the City Council in performing a more effective oversight function over the City budget. We would like to see that happen, too.

But the, in terms of the benchmarks, they make a decent salary now, far better than they, than those who serve in the State legislature, and we also support an increase in the State legislature.

If we jump ahead here -- I mean, if we take the base salary of $112,500 and get rid of the LULUs, like we suggest, and like a previous commission eight years ago also suggested looking into this matter, and what happened? Nothing. This is why I'm emphasizing the unique opportunity and responsibility you have to make, to not only be fair to the City Council members and be fair to all the elected officials who serve the public interest, but to be fair to the taxpayers, as well, because that's who you're ultimately serving.
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But in terms of benchmarks, I mean, if you take a $112,500 salary, add in the average stipend of about 10 or $12,000, that brings you up to about 125,000. You bring in a cost of living raise, that may take you up to 132, 135,000, depending upon what you look at.

And then, as a bonus, shall we say, for taking these steps to get rid of LULUs, and to also restrict outside income, and to use it as a carrot, you can get to at least $143,000 as a baseline to start the discussion with some, um, um, available space to go up higher than that.

But I think 143,000, if we were taking, if all things were equal, incorporating a cost of living increase, getting rid of the LULUs and adding a little bit of a bonus, you get 143,000.

MR. SCHWARZ: So, I want to go back to Paul's first question about whether we should consider proposing a -- in the future, a regular cost of living increase that's automatic.

And it has some, um, merit to it, but just to -- and we haven't decided any of these things, but just to talk out loud among ourselves, including with you, what worries me a little bit about that concept are two things: One, ordinary citizens
are not guaranteed a cost of living increase, a cost of living increase.

And the second thing that bothers me about it, although we have not all come to any total and final judgments, is that if you, if for a government official future raises are automatic, it removes any democratic accountability.

MR. DADEY: Correct.

MR. SCHWARZ: So, they get their extra pay, but they don't have to have to go through the rigor and sometimes hard public position of saying there should be more pay for my office. I mean, neither of us have a final position, but give your views about those factors.

MR. DADEY: I mean, I think you're exactly right. I mean, you know, accountability needs to be built into our democracy in order for there not to be the use of power for corruption. And I think that if there is this sense that we're going to be entitled to a regular annual increase, it removes the sense of having to prove one's value in the work that one does, and you may -- a member of the City Council, or anyone, would just see it as something that they are entitled to, something which, as you point out,
most New Yorkers, if not all New Yorkers, don't experience. And so, again, they need to lead by example. They should not be necessarily thinking of their own needs in this, and we would not support an automatic costs of living increase. There should be a commission like this every four years to talk about these very issues, because maybe there is a way in which the City Council takes on greater responsibility or greater authority, and maybe deserve a raise even beyond the cost of living increase. So, we would not support that, because we think that this is a way in which we can build accountability into this issue of compensation.

MR. SCHWARZ: Talking about cost of living, you know, it's a vague term. And there are at least a couple of ways of thinking about it. One is the consumer price index, the CPI. And the other is median household income. Without regard to which of those might lead in any given time to a higher or lower number, conceptually, which do you think, what are the benefits of one, and what are the benefits of the other?

MR. DADEY: Well, Citizens Union has many
prescriptions as to what we'd like you to do. I
don't think we're going to take on that
particular task for you and make a suggestion. I
think, however, CPI is used as the more common
indicator, and I don't think you'd be wrong to
use that.

MR. SCHWARZ: It may be more common, and it
also may be less relevant. I mean, that's the
question for us.

MS. BRIGHT: I would just ask one other
question. You said there were several components
that got you to a benchmark of $143,000. One is
a cost of living adjustment, but in the here and
now; so, that contrasts to being opposed to
future ones, I think, is just an interesting
point. And then the other is really around the
motion of earned outside income can't exceed more
than 25 percent. When, in fact, what you want to
do is ensure that the public official is focused
on the role. So, maybe a percent of compensation
is not the best benchmark, because you can do a
variety of philanthropic activities, as an
example, that would never get you to that hurdle,
but might lose track of your public service. So,
can you talk about how you came up with that --
MR. DADEY: Sure. I believe the City Charter requires the full-time attention of the City Council in fulfilling their obligations, and not necessarily labeling it a full-time job, but their full-time attention. And if you're an elected official, I imagine there's not a moment you can walk away from your responsibilities.

The unfortunate thing is that we only have, we only have a term, a limit of two four-year terms for City Council members. We want to be able to --

MR. SCHWARZ: Do you think that's harmful for the City Council, by the way?

MR. DADEY: Yes.

MR. SCHWARZ: Because?

MR. DADEY: Because I think it empowers, even to a greater extent, the authority of the Mayor.

If you want an effective legislative body, you've got to have, you're going to have a legislative body whose terms in office are longer than the executive. You know?

You created a wonderful city government, Mr. Schwarz, that has performed admirably well. It was an experiment that has proved valuable. But
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the Mayor, the office of Mayor has gotten very strong, and the Council has been somewhat weakened, I think, by having term limits. It has also brought in a lot of fresh faces, which has been healthy, very healthy, and the City Council demographic makeup now finally matched the demographic makeup of our city.

And, you know, if you -- when -- in 2001 when term limits took effect, who was elected to succeed those that had to leave office? Many of the people who were chief of staff to them, and they were, you know, essentially very politically connected to the current City Council. What we've seen over the last 15 years is that disappear, and you see a whole new brand of community activism coming into the City Council, people who have grown up politically working with neighborhood organizations, nonprofit associations, and it's been very refreshing. But we want to continue to attract a wide array of interested candidates to office. Having an eight-year, excuse me, an eight-year term essentially, you know, discourages lawyers from coming in. If they're going to want to serve the public, and they know they're only getting a
maximum of eight years without any opportunities for future public service. And that's why I think you need to leave a public, you know, you've got to have, allow some earned outside income -- not only for lawyers, but for, you know, people who may want to teach, people who might want to write a book, and that's why it's very limited. People who may, you know, have other financial interests, um, that they need in order to make their own ends meet, to simply do it on the basis of a public salary, I think, would not be a public service.

MR. SCHWARZ: You know, you're talking about lawyers. A lawyer who joins the government, whether by being elected, or by being in an administration, brings something valuable, as does a community organizer, as does a businessman.

But when you come into the government, you don't leave behind those skills that you had before. I mean, just to do a personal example, when I joined the city government for five years, I was a private lawyer, and I went back to being a private lawyer afterwards. But it was not, I was not allowed to, nor would I have wanted to,
um, continue to practice law outside, because picking up on Commissioner Bright's point, it is really a tough and demanding job to be a good City Council person.

MR. DADEY: But your position was not an elected position, it was an appointed position. And it was understood that you would be totally dedicated, as a full-time employee, to your tasking, and your responsibilities were such that you had to be. The City Council, arguably, has to be, as well. But there is some greater flexibility in terms of the hours, in terms of their obligations. They don't have to be at City Hall 9 to 5.

MR. SCHWARZ: Well, yes. But isn't it -- I mean, wouldn't it be your position as a -- I taught Commissioner Bright the expression "googoo" when we last met. It's a wonderful, great expression, and it's a compliment.

A PARTICIPANT: We wish it would die, though. Because it's also used in a derogatory way.

MR. SCHWARZ: But not by me.

MR. DADEY: Never by you.

MR. SCHWARZ: Isn't, don't we want the City
Council people to be devoting most, all of their
time to the job, and you may have some data on
this. Aren't almost all City Council people now
ones that do not have another job? Do you know
the facts on that?

MR. DADEY: There are fewer City Council
members in this Council than at any other time
that earn outside income. We don't have the
exact numbers on it, because we're still doing
our own research, having just gotten the
financial disclosure statements, which is another
issue that we would like you to tackle, since it
is a pain in the neck to try and get that.

MR. SCHWARZ: Do you mean it's a pain in the
neck for the bureaucracy to get the statements?

MR. DADEY: These should be online.

MR. SCHWARZ: We've been told that by our
director of --

MR. DADEY: These should be online. You
know, they're online in Albany now; they should
be online in New York City. Because it's just
another way in which New Yorkers, as taxpayers
and as residents, can hold our elected officials
accountable to kind of see what their business
dealings are.
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MR. SCHWARZ: Assuming that every single person in this room would 100 percent agree with you on that subject, I think that's something that we might comment on, but I don't think that's something we should condition our recommendations on.

MR. DADEY: No. Of course not, and I don't think we're recommending that. But it definitely should make it a part of your recommendations.

So, I mean, you can see in the rest of this testimony, I mean --

MR. SCHWARZ: What about LULUs. You started --

MR. DADEY: So, I mean, just let me put a fine point on the prospectivity. 37 -- 37 of 51 Council Members have said that they think the raises should be prospective. I don't see any City Council members here asking for a raise. I don't think there's any City Council members that have submitted public testimony either; have they?

MR. SCHWARZ: No.

MR. DADEY: No. Unlike eight years ago, when you did have the speaker come and speak to this issue, and had other members of the City
Council make the case.

So, why give them something that they've not yet asked for, and why give them something that they say that they oppose? Why, why do that? So, I would just urge you not to get out ahead of what they have said publicly, or not have not said at all.

In terms of LULUs, we've got to get rid of them. I mean, you know, it's a back door way of adding to their compensation.

MR. SCHWARZ: Which doesn't, which can completely mislead people, because just to take that point for a minute, it would be accurate for someone to say the City Council's salary is $112,500, because the other thing is called an allowance, and not a salary.

MR. DADEY: No member of the City Council, I believe, makes $112,500. They all make a little more based on their lulu. And I think if you get rid of the LULUs, you'll have a more democratic functioning Council, and a more effective City Council.

MR. SCHWARZ: Explain that.

MR. DADEY: Sure. So, since it is a back doorway of adding to the compensation, we have...
far too many committees and everyone has a special title for all that extra work that needs to be done. And, you know, there are 51 members of the City Council, and they each have something that they oversee -- a task force, a committee, you know, a subcommittee -- and they're entitled to an $8,000 lulu or more; and that also gives the opportunity for the speaker to use that as a way in which to, um, extract loyalty on particular issues that they may not otherwise do, because it's going to affect their personal compensation.

So, if you remove that, if you just add it to their base pay and not have it be done at the discretion of the City Council speaker, you improve the City Council because you're taking away that leverage and you'll have a more democratic, a more robust Council, and hopefully there will not be this need to create all these committees and task forces.

I mean, talk to some members of the City Council. I don't know how they do their job, because they serve on way too many committees; they're not able to drill down on key important issues because they're on seven different
committees, and they're running from one committee to the next, never able to focus. And I think that's a disservice to the institution, because no one can really focus.

But you know when you have a strong mayoral form of government, and you have term limits already at their disadvantage.

So, in removing and lessening and removing the seconds, we may build a, make fewer the number of committees, and that would be good for the council.

MR. SCHWARZ: Did you say that there's a correlation between the number of committees, which is like 45 or something like that, a correlation between the number of committees and the LULUs?

MR. DADEY: Most definitely. I mean --

MR. SCHWARZ: Explain that one more time for the record.

MR. DADEY: So, I mean, committees are created not because of a need, but for maybe the need to give someone a LULU and increase their compensation. I mean, take a look at that list, and some of those can be consolidated.

We have more committees in the City Council
than the United States Congress, the House of Representatives. Think about that for a minute.

MR. SCHWARZ: That's a very interesting fact. Are you sure of that fact?

MR. DADEY: I am -- where do you want me to start next? Yes. Now, if you get down to subcommittees and what have you, maybe there's a little bit of a difference. But there are like 20 or 21 members, 21 committees in Congress. And you're able to have these members of Congress drill down on these issues and focus, because they can't focus on more than a few and be effective.

Imagine if we had a City Council where those serving on the general welfare committee could really focus on the delivery of social services, as opposed to having to worry also about serving on the public safety committee and, you know, the parks and recreation committee. And, I mean, all these disparate issues. How do you get to focus if you're searching on seven different committees?

MS. BRIGHT: And is that something that you would advocate doing prospectively, as well, so that you wouldn't increase salaries --
MR. DADEY: Yes. Most definitely. And it's been a longstanding position of Citizens Union.

MS. BRIGHT: Relative to LULUs?

MR. DADEY: Yes. We have long argued that the City Council does itself a disservice by actually having as many committees as it does.

MR. SCHWARZ: I thought your argument wasn't that we, who it really isn't our business, should instruct the Council on how many committees they have, but you think one reason to get rid of LULUs is that it tends to proliferate the number of committees?

MR. DADEY: Most definitely. Yes.

And we have as many committees as there needs to be LULUs in order to ensure that everybody on the Council gets an added second.

MR. QUINTERO: I want to --

Two related to the same point. When I spoke about benchmarking before, you responded with an amount, and what I was really trying to understand is because of the roles.

Um, we have, as a Commission, at the state level, the federal level for elected we have private sector, we have non-profits.

So, my question really was: From the
Citizen Union's perspective, which are the positions that are most relevant for comparison, because that incurs a lot of consideration?

And two, not only talking about the federal, um, how do federal, you mentioned the federal committees, that that was interesting, how does federal compensation factor into perhaps the ceilings on what we might look at or do --

MR. DADEY: Yes. I mean -- you know, all three, you know, levels -- Congress, State legislature and City Council -- are full-time jobs. You know, they may, they may manifest themselves in different ways and the Council and we may see the legislatures perform their duties in different ways. I mean, for -- you know, the State Legislature, um, is in office for, in session for only six months of the year. And they, other six months of the year they're only there maybe two or three days a week. And so, there's this argument that, you know, they need to be kept part-time, because they're only in Albany half the time, if that.

But I think under values the important role that state legislators play and also providing constituent services holding hearings on
important policy issues in the off-session, um, and really becoming, and one of the issues, and participating in budget hearings and all that, so even though they're not in Albany per se, in session, they're still doing a full-time job. And so, even -- and the Council, if you take a look at the Council, the Council meets 12 months a year -- I mean, twice a month at least. And so, you see a very active City Council because there are more sessions throughout the year than you see in Albany. But that doesn't mean that their jobs are, you know, and that the state legislature has a job that's half as important as the City Council, and members of Congress, you know, they're -- you know, they go through, you know, they work year round, too, but they have large recess sessions, where they have to go back to their constituents and, you know, listen. You can't be an effective representative if you're not listening.

In terms of benchmarks relative to these, I mean, members of Congress are paid a very significant and handsome sum, and probably an appropriate sum, given the level of their responsibilities.
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In our opinion the legislatures is woefully inadequately paid. We argued for a long time that they need to be, their salaries need to be increased dramatically, their outside income needs to be curbed, and we need to get rid of community -- the same positions we have here in the City Council.

I mean, if you want to create a perfect system where corruption reigns, well, look at the way in which we compensate our state legislators. We pay them very little money.

They deal with people who are significant campaign donors who are very wealthy, and they're making decisions about the business interests, or whatever the interests are of these campaign contributors, while earning very little money, and then are able to earn all kinds of outside money.

You have a situation ripe for corruption and temptation, which is why the whole State Legislature needs to be, compensation system needs to be revamped. And actually they're meeting on Monday under the leadership of Sheila Birnbaum.

But I would not compare, um, our City
Council's responsibilities to that of the state legislature and trying to think well, maybe there -- there's no comparison. You shouldn't try -- if you're trying to make sense out of it, good luck. It's not going to work.

In terms of looking at -- I think you can look at other city councils across the country. You can look at the Los Angeles City Council; you can look at the Seattle City Council; you can look at Chicago -- you know, where there are --

I mean, the Los Angeles City Council, however, has a greater level of responsibility than that of the New York City Council. And so, they have, you know, and I think there are fewer of them; and so, their responsibilities also have, are more significant as a result of the proportion of that responsibility to the collective legislative branch.

I think that we just have to, in terms of -- I think comparison shopping is not -- it may be helpful to inform, but I don't think it's necessary that will get you where you want to go. I think you really need to take a look at where they've gone and where we'd want them to go.

MR. SCHWARZ: You know, the -- have you
ever -- Congress now has a three-day week. They work Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, and they don't start Tuesday until they've flown back to Washington, and they leave Thursday in order to fly back to their home.

And there have been recently some articles that making their job in Congress very much a part-time job has detracted from Congress's effectiveness and has added to the gridlock in Congress. And we know those articles, but I wonder if you thought about that question at all.

MR. DADEY: It's not a part-time job. It's the public face of their job once they're in session. Their job is much more than simply showing up in the chamber and casting a vote and debating issues. There's a lot that goes on that the public does not necessarily see.

The public hearings back home, um, the constituent meetings where they listen and solicit advice and suggestions on how they should handle any number of issues. The time that is spent in a meeting with their staffs in helping the individual members of Congress understand the issues. Just because they are not meeting in session does not necessarily mean that they're
not fulfilling their obligations 100 percent of the time by, in other ways. I just think it's something we have as an -- I think we have an obligation to educate the public that, even though they may not be meeting in session, whether it's the City Council or, you know, I mean, by the City Council, I mean, maybe they should only pay for the days that they show up in the chamber, which would be outrageous if that were to happen.

MR. SCHWARZ: So, other questions?

MR. QUINTERO: No.

MS. BRIGHT: No.

MR. SCHWARZ: So, have you, you have some more?

MR. DADEY: I just wanted to be clear that, you know, our recommendations, our core recommendation is that the City Council -- our core recommendation is that all collective officials in the City of New York should have their compensation increased. Um, I think, a similar, you should look at cost of living increases for the other citywide offices and the district attorneys and the borough presidents.
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You know, the -- I would urge that the -- do not be as generous with the borough presidents as you are with the City Council members. The borough presidents do not have as much authority, and I think that -- or responsibility. I think that, um, with the Charter changes 26 years ago, one thing that's kind of stayed with the borough presidents was the prestige of the office; and so, that they were then entitled to a better salary. I think there should be some equity between the borough presidents and the City Council members, given the amount of work that a City Council member does. That doesn't mean that I think you should be raising the City Council member's salary to that of the borough president's, or necessarily cutting, although I think it would be appropriate, the salaries of the borough presidents to reflect their responsibilities.

MR. SCHWARZ: One piece of data that I think is on our Website, you can correct me if I'm wrong on this, I know we did a study of, between 1983 and today, how much have each of the salaries for each of the offices changed. And the Mayor's salaries from '83 to today has
changed by 103 percent, and the Borough
President's changed by 100 percent. And that
figure struck me, anyway, as kind of surprising.
How do you react to that?

MR. DADEY: Um, not fair. Not fair at all.
And just because you hold an office, even if it
has less authority and responsibility -- I mean,
imagine if responsibilities of anyone at a
business or a nonprofit organization were given,
were cut back, um, it's quite appropriate to have
their compensation cut back, too, to reflect what
they do.

MR. SCHWARZ: Or at least have it not grow
as fast.

MR. DADEY: Exactly -- not grow as fast.
You know, I mean, the Mayor's responsibilities
have grown tremendously, and appropriately so,
because I think that's been the key to our
success, one of the keys to our success is having
a strong mayoral form of city government. We
should not put them in the same -- that's
unfortunate that that has been the case and we
did not have that data, but it shows the
discrepancy and the disparity between the
offices. Or it shows that there's this
perception that they deserve the same kind of
increases, even though there's a great disparity
between their responsibilities and authority.

So, let me, in closing out, just say that,
um, we don't have any specific recommendations on
what the citywide offices are, or the district
attorneys, or the borough presidents, other than
they should be increased to reflect cost of
living increases, to reflect the stature of the
offices and what they've been given in terms of
their responsibilities.

But the thing that, I think, is most ripe
for reform is the City Council, and we would
support a significant increase in their
compensation, but only provided that several
things happen. And just to summarize.

It would be the cap on outside income, to
something of 25 percent or less.

It would be ending the LULUs, all but for a
few significant leadership positions, and then
also would be prospective.

I think if you add those three reforms, and
those are acceptable, you could move forward with
the confidence of Citizens Union and others who
are interested in seeing that we have those in
office who are serving the public interest in making some very, very big decisions about the City. And we need to accord them a compensation that reflects those responsibilities and authority.

Thank you.

MR. SCHWARZ: Thank you. I have enjoyed the dialogue, and I think my colleagues also enjoyed the dialogue with you.

MR. DADEY: I hope that I can take this example into other opportunities for public comment and spend 45 minutes in giving testimony, just as I have here today. I don't think that will ever happen again, but thank you.

MR. SCHWARZ: Thank you. So, Ms. Delgado.


MR. SCHWARZ: Thank you for coming.

MS. DELGADO: Hi. Roxanne Delgado. Thank you, Commissioner, for your opening statement that public input will be considered before the Commission makes their recommendations, because per my experience these decisions are made before the public has spoken.

So, thank you for this new change.
Okay. Just, I have two copies of my testimony just in case.

MR. DADEY: Gene Russianoff is on his way.

MR. SCHWARZ: Okay.

MS. DELGADO: I'm going to start from page 5 regarding LULUs.

I'd like to say, LULUs must be included with the base compensation of the City Council members in comparison with their counterparts.

Over 92 percent of the City Council members receive LULUs.

And just to refer to page 29, 47 of the City Council members are, head some sort of committees and received stipends ranging from 8,000 to -- sorry, from 8,000 to -- page 29 -- page 25, they range from 8,000 to 15,000.

So, their salaries, average salary is about 120,000 for most of the City Council members.

Okay. So, over 92 percent of City Council's members receive LULUs.

It's sort of and rounds off their salaries to the public.

In case of 2006 my City Council member, James Vacca, and 46 other City Council members blatantly ignored the Commission's recommendation
eliminating LULUs and voted themselves, voted against Avella's amendment to eliminate them.

As I stated above, the Commission did not include the LULUs in comparing the salaries of the City Council with their counterparts.

The City Council received a 25 percent pay raise after serving less than a year in their new term. In fact, my City Councilor, James Vacca, ran for the open seat in 2005 that paid 90,000, and received a 25 percent raise after serving less than a year in office.

City Council member Vacca and 42 other Council members voted against an amendment eliminating LULUs as recommended by the Commission in 2006 and gave themselves a 25 percent pay raise.

Only five City Council members, including CM Avella, voted to eliminate LULUs as recommended by the Commission in October, 2006.

Therefore, it's very important that LULU is included as their total compensation by this Commission in 2015.

Regarding part-time or full-time, page 7.

In the prior Commission, the City Council member Christine Quinn and other City Council
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members argued that they worked full-time. Unless their time sheets verify these continued claims, their job is statutory part-time, and should be factored in your computations as a part-time job.

The City Council could have recommended statutory change to full-time when the Charter Commission convened in August, 2015.

Regarding outside income.

As reported, and I actually saw all the financial disclosure forms. I went to COIB and it was like 24 hours of turnout. They gave us, they were very cooperative. I had the experience. Outside income. As reported and verified in the annual financial disclosure form, 40 of the 51 City Council members do not have any outside income, and seven of the 11 make an average between 1,000 and 5,000.

The remaining three City Councilmen have incomes as follows, which I've listed, but I'll skip back. The lack of outside income doesn't mean they are working full-time in the City Council. It may mean they make sufficient money, not in need of a second job, but like many New
Yorkers who have more than one job to pay their bills.

It also may mean they are not employable in the private sector and should be appreciative of their current employment.

On page 9. Additional factors, office perks. After my City Council member, James Vacca, and 28 other City Council members voted themselves a third term in 2008, against the will of the people. They gained a lifetime retiree health insurance that costs the City up to 12,600 a year each. Those benefits come out to millions of dollars in expenses over the next few decades.

Under current rules, City employees must work ten years and pay into the pension system to become eligible for retiree health benefits, but the term limit laws restrict members of the citywide offices to two consecutive four-year terms, two years shy of the requirements. By voting themselves a third term, the elected officials and their staff hit the ten-year mark without having to look for a new job with the City.

So, while comparing with their counterparts, please, health plans, retirement plans and other
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perqs, like drivers, should be taken into consideration. Excuse me.

And this -- this section is very important to me, retroactively or not.

I'm an accountant. But when I was looking, first, it should not be applied to the current term or the next term, because how can it be permissible for an elected official to vote for his or her raise, as they did in 2006.

Second, any methodology or CPI applied should be from the start of the current term, not before it began, as it was done in 2006.

For instance, at the charter revision commission, several City Council members, including Councilman Williams, argued that they ran in 2009 when three terms was the law of the land.

But applying the two terms retroactively to those who ran in 2009 would be unfair to them. So, the Commission, under the wrong done in 2008 when term limits were extended, they reverted to term limits back to two terms, but did not apply them retroactively to those freshmen City Council members who ran in 2009; so, it's only fair and consistent to not apply any increases.
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retroactively since 112,500 salary was and is the
law of the land when he ran in 2013 with a term
beginning in 2014.

In fact, 2006 the City Council members were
overpaid since LULUs, and their part-time status
were not included in comparison to their
counterparts.

And also, the CPI should only have applied
to 2006.

As a sign-off, they did retroactively from
2000 to 2006, but actually, no, after Nine
Eleven, most of lost our jobs or had to do with
less. So, I felt that was unfair.

Because you also have to consider the, like
the Commission said, we should have a commission
every four years, because it's the financial
environment of the city doesn't mean that it's
getting financially sound, as it is thankfully
today, or better than it was in 2001.

Also, just because the only applies to 2006,
the beginning of their new term.

However, since it was applied from 2001
retroactively, it gave to the council members,
like James Vacca, the 25 percent pay raise after
serving less than a year in office. He received
increases for years that he was not in office.

Pay cut on more raises should be considered.

In 2006, San Francisco, the 11 members of the board of supervisors received 112,000 under a salary setting commission, until a salary setting commission decided that 112,000 was too much and chopped their pay to 90,000.

The Commission should look at the constituents' medium income.

In some districts the City Council members were making more than four times than their constituents. The Bronx has a median household income of less than 35,000.

Okay. What has become the --

I have to disagree with the to the Citizens Union, because they do not work full-time.

I have witnessed my City Council member, James Vacca, campaigning for DA Darnel Clark during business hours.

I see him in Council hearings making his sound bytes for the news against bills, and then leave before I've testified or anyone else of the public.

I see him basically shmoozing the community group, but I don't see any real value to me,
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personally.

So, and I'd like to mention this article that I enclose on page -- it's on page 21. It's an article by Seth Barron.

He says six figure shmoozers.

I have to totally agree with him, because it seems like very often they're running for the next seat.

And my City Council member basically, after 39 years in total career, he just announced he'll run for another office after his third term ends in 2017.

Now, finally with regard to the District Attorney. A dark day for democracy in the Bronx after Darcel Clark was crowned as our next DA.

Our current Bronx DA was nominated to a judgeship and the Bronx Democratic Party hand-picked his successor.

This orchestrating plan was reported over a year ago before it happened in September.

The party cut the voters out of the election process. There was no debate, since the candidate refused one, it was not mandated to have one.

Based on this alone, I think the DA should
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1 not have a raise.

2 Also, there is nothing wrong with DA staff
3 making more money than the DA.

4 The District Attorney has the authority,
5 time and prestige of his office. The District
6 Attorney should not compare himself to those in
7 the private market. There are just as many
8 lawyers who are looking for jobs as their are
9 lawyers making millions. The DA chose to run for
10 this office to serve his people, not to make
11 money.

12 And in regard to public advocates and
13 borough presidents, these offices have little
14 power over city funding and policies.
15 They advocate for causes and serve as
16 government liaisons.

17 Many critics argue that these positions
18 should be eliminated. Even though I do like my
19 public advocate and some of the borough
20 presidents, I don't think a raise beyond the CPI
21 adjustment beginning of 2014 is appropriate.

22 And I just say, the Mayor's salary is like
23 one of the highest in the nation. So, I think if
24 you approve any raise, it will be the tale of two
25 cities.
In conclusion, in the Bronx voter turnout is at its all-time low. Less than 3 percent of registered voters went to the polls. We have politicians who lie to get elected, ignore the people who want the office.

The City Council member, James Vacca, voted against eliminating LULUs, as well as voting to extend his own term.

He made sound bytes that it's proposed a five-cent fee on plastic bags as another tax to hurt the poor, but it's not a tax. Just use a reusable bag.

The City spends more money to transport plastic bags, as well as the cost of these bags jamming expensive sanitation machinery, not to mention the damage it does to our environment and sea life.

And Council Member James Vacca, I'm not picking, like, on Vacca, it's just that he's my City Council member. It could apply to all of them.

On City Council member James Vacca's 2014 item disclosure form, I know that he has at least 500 -- at least 500,000 in deferred compensation plan, in addition to his lifelong city pension.
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It was a sign of injustice when I gave my own time and money to help our environment while he gets generously paid to do the opposite.

And I just wanted to quickly, if you don't mind, go over the charts in appendix A, sorry -- appendix A.

MR. SCHWARZ: Don't rush. You're doing fine.

MS. DELGADO: That is actually the appendix of the last commissioner's report dated 2006. And this is salary data for elected officials of the 25 largest cities, page 13. But, like I said, the Commission in 2006 did not include LULUs in addition to the base salary. So, when they put 90K, they made it seem like New York City City Council is the top sixth highest paid, when in actuality if you include the LULUs, they were the top fourth paid.

And after they gave themselves the 25 percent raise, while limiting the LULUs, they were the top second highest paid, higher than their full-time counterparts.

And also, I'd just like to say City Council actually was a part-time job, because it was to be a legislative body, but somehow they created
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their own entire -- they increased their staff, they increased their budget. And they're also not a liaison between me and my city government. Like, how many liaisons do I need? I have the public advocate, I have the Borough President, I have the community board, now City Council? It's too much.

And now, I just may sign off like appendix E. I don't think the comparison to me as a public agency, corporation and union is appropriate, because they -- like the Department of Education's Chancellor Farina, she handles a large staff. It's no comparison to what City Council does, or borough president, or what my -- perhaps the Mayor and the Controller, but no one else.

And regarding A2, like Mr. Dadey mentioned, of the Citizens Union, he mentioned that the Los Angeles City Council does more work than New York, I do agree, because they have 15 City Council members, and when you divide it by the population, they actually oversee 61 percent more residents or constituents than their counterparts in New York City. So, it makes sense per resident that they do more work.
And again, regarding CPI, only again I would like to say, please, if you're going to benchmark with CPI, do it from the beginning of their latest term. Don't go back. Because first of all, there's a new City Council member elected in CD 23 in Queens. That means if you go back to 2006, that would be like at least another 25 percent increase for someone who never served office before 2015.

So, then again, page 18 is the salary with increases per Mayor personal orders. This is again part of the Commission's report 2006. I think there's a conflict of interest if the Mayor and citywide electors raises are correlated with their staff, because otherwise, there's a conflicted of interest, if they're increasing indirectly their own rates, their own payroll, own salary.

MR. SCHWARZ: That was, you said, on page 5 of your document. There was one of the things I marked as I was reading through your very extensive document. And it's an interesting point.

I don't think we are likely to look at the percentage increases for the city regular workers
and collective bargaining as anything other than something, if we went beyond those for the elected officials, I think we would be very troubled. So, to me what they're relevant to is just to make sure that we're not going beyond them. They're not a target for what we want to do.

MS. DELGADO: Okay. Thank you.

MR. SCHWARZ: Can I ask you a question? You have lots of statistics in here and a great deal of research. When did you get time to do all this?

MS. DELGADO: I actually did it in one day, actually, because I'm actually --

MR. SCHWARZ: You did this in one day?

MS. DELGADO: Yes. I only took time to actually go through to COIB, because unfortunately they don't have it on the Website; so, I had to go physically to their office downtown to review documents. I write down what I already knew from my experience, or I'm very just pop the numbers on the spreadsheet and then I describe in words what was on my spreadsheet.

MR. SCHWARZ: Wow. For one day, particularly, it's a heck of a job.
MR. QUINTERO: Well, I have the same reaction. First of all, thank you for your diligence.

Second, I didn't realize that the forms had to be in transcribed information. Because one of the things that we didn't mention, you know, we created a Website so that the public could really submit information, and we've had great work done by also one person.

And to the extent that there's disclosure forms and information that folks can submit, and it's really helpful for us, because we want to create, you know, a different references and pieces.

So, if you have source documents that you've collected, please submit them, I guess, is my first comment. And for those in the audience who weren't aware that we have a Website, it's NYC dot gov forward slash Quad Comm. Everything that we're looking at we're posting, so you can take a look. You know, this is only going to be as good as the input we receive. I just wanted to make a little pitch for that.

MS. BRIGHT: I think also -- I was also going to say that many of the things that you
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mentioned we are looking at. But I want you to
take comfort in that. We are looking at the
benefits and pensions. We are looking at
compensation relative to the citizens that the
elected officials represent relative to the Bronx
household income. I want you to know that we all
take those things very seriously, and have a lot
of research, much of which is on -- actually
most, all of which is on the site, and want you
to know how seriously we take all of those
benchmarks and data points and factor them into
our thinking.

MS. DELGADO: I thank you, Doctor, because
I think this Commission is the only time we have
to keep our City Council honest. And that's why
I'm hoping, that's why I put a little time in
doing this, because I felt that you were the
person, because I feel like the City Council,
they have already made up their minds, if they
see -- it's human nature. You know, we are
driven by self-interest, everyone, it's part of
our human nature. But I felt that this
Commission being independent, and they don't have
any self-interest in pay raises, that they, you
can consider some of the, my concerns regarding
what happened in 2006.

MR. SCHWARZ: In your document, at least
twice and maybe three times, you mentioned median
household income. And we are considering median
household income.

Now, my question to you is: Do you think
median household income is more relevant than
changes in the consumer price index, which you
don't mention?

MS. DELGADO: I actually think, and I know
how it's more important to the City Council,
because of how much money they make. Unlike
DC37, where the average household income is less
than 50K, I can understand why they're trying to
catch up with the CPI.

But when you reach a certain point, like say
Goldman Sachs salary, I don't think CPI should be
a factor you're concerned with. It's those who
are trying to make ends meet.

And also because, also you represent -- how
can you understand the burden your -- your
constituents feel when you don't walk the same
shoes as we do, you're not in the same shoes as
we are, but we're trying to pay rent, where rents
are increasing at a faster pace than our
salaries. Even MetroCard transportation. So, I don't understand. Sometimes it feels there actually is a lack of understanding with the City Council as to how residents are burdened with city policies and with the changes in our environment.

MS. BRIGHT: And you would be pleased to know we are looking at the cost of living as a factor, not only at the Consumer Price Index, but also how much it costs, just what you said -- rent, food, you know, utilities, what does it actually cost to live here for the average citizen, and relative to the elected officials.

MS. DELGADO: Thank you. Because I feel like demographics is important, but also someone should understand how the residents in their district live. And being on food stamps for one week is not understanding how your residents live. Like, you're not at all -- you know what I meant, a little study of the City Council, they all went on food stamps for one week to see how their people feel living on food stamps for one week. That is not living on food stamps for a year. Like, I mean, people have to suffer, people that's in the Bronx. And I think it's
unfair for City Council members to make at least
three times more than we make, not to mention
that they have drivers, not to mention they have,
you know, little perqs -- health benefits. I
mean, I'm not trying to be cruel, but it's just
being fair.

MR. SCHWARZ: So, thank you for coming.

Thank you for doing so much work.

MS. DELGADO: Thank you.

MR. SCHWARZ: I thank you for coming all the
way down from the Bronx, and had we world enough
and time, which is Andrew Marvell, had we world
enough and time, we would have a hearing in every
borough, but we don't have enough time; so, we
happened to pick the two most populous. But you
made a very good point in your letter that for
people in the Bronx, it's harder to get here by
subway than for any other borough. But thanks so
much for testifying, and for all the hard work
you did.

MS. DELGADO: Thank you, Commissioner.

Well, thank you for your time; I do appreciate
it, regardless of your recommendation. Thank
you.

MR. SCHWARZ: Okay. So, other people to
testify? I think I saw Gene Russianoff come in.
So, come forward now.

When you weren't here we were delayed coming
out from where you were by a lot on the subway.
I said that, unlike most hearings, we want
to interrupt you and ask you questions, and you
can't infer anything from the question as to what
direction we're thinking in and --

MR. RUSSIANOFF: I can always hope.

Good evening, commissioners. Staff.

My name is Gene Russianoff, and I'm a senior
attorney for the New York Public Interest
Research Group, which is a student --
college student-directed environmental and
consumer and good government organization.

I have the honor of having testified before
all five previous Quadrennial Commissions, and I
notice there was a reference to Mr. Friedlander
and myself. I'm one of them; so, I go a ways
back on this. And we testified before this
commission because we thought you were perfect
vehicle for considering the overall compensation
of public officials, not just the salary, but
the, the -- I don't know if you call them perqs,
but the legislative stipends, and whether there
should be some limits on their ability to be
part-time, whether we should look at what
Congress does and many other state legislatures
require, either full-time, or put limits on the
amount of outside work they can do.

MR. SCHWARZ: As between the two of those,
Gene, if I can call you Gene, my colleagues
should know that in an article I wrote about the
1989 Charter, I referred to Mr. Russianoff as the
indefatigable and unflappable Gene Russianoff.

MR. RUSSIANOFF: Thank you.

MR. SCHWARZ: But what do you see as the
connection between the full-time issue and the
LULU issue? First question. And second, with
respect to full-time, would you favor just a
requirement of full-time, as with all other city
officials, or would you favor a 25 percent limit
on the amount of outside income?

MR. RUSSIANOFF: Well, on the first, this is
maybe a little simplistic, but it all deals with
their compensation.

I mean, this is what they, when they're
capping up their livelihood for the year, they --
I'm sure they report on their income taxes the
LULUs they receive and report the outside income.
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So, the feds treat it as compensation, and I think they treat it as compensation. And so, I think if you want to look at their overall package of benefits, it's important to include these. These are major items.

And we strongly favor the Congressional model, which allows members of the federal government to work 15 percent of their, the take 15 percent of their time, and they can devote that to outside activities. And I see benefit to that. You know?

Legislators often say, well, you know, this is, my teaching as an adjunct, I get a sense of what the young people are like in my district, or I do a little legal work, you know, for, you know, for neighbors' wills, trusts and estates and community work. And that seems to me, you know, more flexible, and it's really -- it's not in their interest, you know, to figure out ways to derive income for themselves beyond this level. I mean, it seems to me like a fair compromise between the desire to have more experience and, um, and -- and it does represent the kind of differing role that the Council people serve, as opposed to, let's say, citywide,
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borough-wide officials.

So, it's on a slippery slope argument, because you could then argue, well, I assume they just, you know -- you know I come from an era where the Council Members of the most powerful committees in the council, were all individuals with a great deal of outside income, hundreds of thousands of dollars.

I have no insight into, you know, how they reported things and how they earned the money, but watching and reading about the trial, of the two leaders in Albany gives you goosebumps about how much state work was intertwined with their jobs for children and padding their salaries and, you know, the disclosure laws have proven pretty weak, particularly on a state level. And it took a very, very focused U.S. Attorney after, you know, many years to --

So, you know, I can't stand before you and say there's a record of the Council abusing their pay. You know, one thing that changed over time, Mr. Chairman, is that there used to be maybe like a third of the Council, I forget -- we would do, we did annual reports on outside income, and about a third earned substantial outside income.
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They all added the education, the finance
committee, the rules privileges and elections
committee. And today, I think it's probably very
new, and I assume you're looking into this as
part of your preparing the information and
documents.

MR. SCHWARZ: We are. But do you have an
understanding of, today, how many have an outside
job, that's different from outside income?

MR. RUSSIANOFF: I don't. My sense from,
you know, lobbying with them, and talking to
them, is that very few do. And that this job has
become larger because of the '89 Charter, one
that involves real responsibilities and a
professional staff, and it's just, it's a lot --
you know, it's a very engaging job.

So, and I think the people who seek it these
days are ones that are looking to make a mark on
the community, as opposed to racking up one of
the highest law firm salaries.

So, I think -- and I would just go on to
argue that that makes this a very -- you know,
um, it's a time of possibilities. You know, I
recommended this, you know, to a bunch of old
commissions, and they -- and my sense was that,
you know, I wasn't going to get them to adopt something that Peter Vallone -- you know, he had a very large outside income, and he was the speaker of the Council, and he was spitting in the wind. Today I don't think there are those members of the Council. I think they, by and large, greet the system, just, they're just representing the reality that they live.

MR. SCHWARZ: Gene, I want to go back to a couple of things you said when you were talking about whether the job could be full-time and -- or not. And when you mentioned teaching as an example of something, why shouldn't an official in the City government be able to teach. As I understand it, and you'll have to put this in some way into our record, the Corporation Counsel has issued a number of opinions that sort of common sense define what it means to be full-time for the people who are in city government who are full-time and that teaching has been said not to violate the full-time requirement. But that's just a piece of information.

MR. RUSSIANOFF: I didn't know that.

MR. SCHWARZ: Okay. And you made another
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point, which was sort of, um, it's important to
have people in the Council who have varied life
experiences. And, you know, as I said in talking
to Mr. Dadey, or one of us said in talking to Mr.
Dadey, you know, you get people who are community
organizers; you get people who have been lawyers;
you get people who have been businessmen or
women, but they don't lose what they learned from
those various careers by becoming a member of the
executive branch, or by becoming a member of the
City Council.

So, I find, personally, and again we haven't
decided anything at all. We haven't come close
to deciding these issues, and we're just sort of
exploring ideas here with the witnesses. But I
find, personally, the argument that we'll lose
people with experience in, real experience in
life exaggerated, because they don't lose that
experience and if it's something which turns them
on, they can go back to it after they've served
in government. Do you have a reaction to that,
or it's just an observation to --

MR. RUSSIANOFF: My immediate reaction is
ditto. The Council is a much more attractive
institution to people who want to get into
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government. It's a good -- you know, there's
almost a kind of a ladder, right, the community
boards or some community work. And then there
are a couple of chairs in the community board
that are now serving as Council Members. And
they're an ark to being a better check and
balance on the government. They're more aware of
that, in my experience, dealing with them, they
see themselves as, you know, um, representing
voices that aren't always heard, and then, um,
and checking an executive where they feel it's,
you know, he or she is headed in the wrong
direction and, um; so, I think they take their
duties very responsibly.

And I -- you know, there are a huge number
of candidates -- when there's an open seat in the
council, you often see, you know, doubling digit
contenders for the office, and representing
different corners of the district and
representing different backgrounds.

So, you know, it's not like there's, like,
some, I'm supposed to head down the road of --
denigrating a profession, so perhaps I won't go
that way. You know, you're not going to lose
good people.
MR. SCHWARZ: We're not going to lose good people if it is required to be a full-time job?

MR. RUSSIANOFF: Yes. And, you know, term limits, which people can argue both ways on this issue, but, you know, they're only there for eight years. So, they can pursue a career. You know? That career might be an elected office, but, you know, it could be the, you know, their concern that it might be a career killer, which, for people who are running for the Council, I think, you know, it's the contrary. You meet. Lots of people, and you make lots of contacts. You see how the world works. And so -- ditto.

I was going to --

Two other things, two or three other things I wanted to say. I just want to say, I feel like an unrequited lover who is despairing by this Commission over the years, and -- but I'm back. And, you know, you are a perfect vehicle for looking at these compensation issues.

And then, I also wanted to mention that I have, I don't have a conflict, because the conflicts code does not apply to me; I'm not a public servant. But my wife is the Commissioner of the Department of Records and Information.
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Services, and, who knows, maybe I'm one of those
victims of salary compression.

But, in any event, I wanted the Commission
to know that. And, you know, I obviously feel
like I'm an independent voice, and -- but you
should have that on the record.

MR. SCHWARZ: Thank you. Well, I don't
think anybody who knows you would think, or utter
or think that you're not an independent voice.

So, Jill, do you have some questions, or --

MS. BRIGHT: No. I think maybe if you could
just summarize, if you would leave us with two or
three thoughts. I think that was very helpful
with Mr. Dadey.

MR. RUSSIANOFF: Great. You know,
I guess, you know, in your plans and processes --
you talk about these very issues and whether they
should be studied.

I really urge you, whatever you do, that you
create a body of research and literature on this
issue.

It never gets discussed, the merits of it.
It's just these, the bullet hole process.

And, you know, that would help, if not a
Commission four or nine or 11 or 6-1/2 years from
now, whenever the next Commission is appointed, it would help legitimize this as an issue.

   And, um, the Council has -- the amendment to the City Charter, to say that this Commission could look at these issues in the wake of a memo by Mr. Friedlander saying that it was not in its mandate. So, it's clearly, it's clearly --

   MR. SCHWARZ: So, now it clearly is in our mandate to do it.

   MR. RUSSIANOFF: Yes. And it's in your mandate to consider it or not consider it.

   That's the, you know -- so, and --

   But I think you would be making a real contribution by doing that. Now, that's like a very modest step forward.

   MR. SCHWARZ: Let me ask a more rigorous question: Is it your position that we should -- let's say we address LULUs and full-time, and I'm not suggesting how we're going to address them.

   But if we do address them, is it your view that we should make the pay raise for the City Council conditional upon their addressing those issues?

   MR. RUSSIANOFF: You know, yes. And, you know, there may be different ways of doing it.

   But as I read the statute, the Council has the
ultimate, unfettered discretion to enact. So, you can recommend that without impinging on their powers, and they would have to deal with the political realities of, you know, not accepting those recommendations; but that's politics, it's not their power.

So, I think that to have force, to be real, you know, I mean, you need to recommend full-time, or a legislative stipend, or an issue we haven't talked about, which is raising their salaries during their term of office, which is of concern to us. You know, we think these raises should be prospective. And --

So, they -- you know, I think to be real you have to, you have to, it has to be part of a package of compensation. And that's what these are. I mean, I don't think it's a giant leap of faith to say, you know, a legislative stipend is not salary. I pay taxes on it, as was said. And limits on their outside income is clearly, dictates their compensation.

So, I would say Yes. I'm not recommending exactly how to do it. We do say, in the testimony, oppose any pay hike that's not linked to -- but there are other ways of doing it. And
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that, whatever you come up, it should be serious
and that you -- it's something you mean to do.
So, if you go down that road.

MR. SCHWARZ: Thank you. What we are doing
is a lot of research on the history starting
with, um, founding fathers and mothers, but there
weren't any mothers of full-time --

MS. BRIGHT: That's why they need reform.

MR. SCHWARZ: That's why we're getting
reform.

MS. BRIGHT: That's right.

MR. SCHWARZ: Of the history of both
full-time and LULUs, and it's definitely
something we are looking at very carefully. And
I'm just wondering if you've considered why it
was, in early America, that legislators were
definitely not full-time, and whether you
considered whether the fact that they're now
largely full-time also bears on the LULU
question. Really, Gene, have you looked at any
of that history?

MR. RUSSIANOFF: No. But it's something --
you know, the truth is is that if our sense was
the Commission, past Commissions weren't going to
look at it, there wasn't much of a point in our
looking at these issues.

MR. SCHWARZ: Excuse me.

MR. RUSSIANOFF: In the past, doing research on the history, and rationale of this, of these policies didn't make a lot of sense if the commission itself had pretty much closed the door. So --

MR. SCHWARZ: Yes. Well, our door is open, and we are looking at history. We're not saying how we're going to come out, but I would suggest that anybody that's interested in these subjects go back and look at that history. It's quite -- it's quite revealing and important.

MR. RUSSIANOFF: I'll take it. I mean, I have the black letter of the, you know, you're working on your farm and you don't want to be missing the whole season while you're in Washington and, you know, people really had distances to travel, and, um, businesses that had to be attended to, in a way that's partially not true today.

MR. SCHWARZ: It wasn't until the 1930s that New York City, for all positions other than Council, said they had to be full-time. And why is that? That's because it wasn't until more
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recently that government jobs were actually full-time.

So, I recommend everybody look at the history; and then, if they don't, we will display some of the history.

MR. RUSSIANOFF: Well, as a former history major I'm happy to try to do our part to take an independent look and see what you also -- but, as I said earlier, doing this work, in itself, is a, you know, legitimizer and a, that it's a serious policy, which if not adopted here, I hope you do. Maybe the city, the city officials will all be more responsive to this, or more concerned about how they look.

MR. SCHWARZ: You know, you mentioned your wife is the head of the Department of -- what is it Information and -- it's the records department.

MR. RUSSIANOFF: It's the Department of Records and Information Services. Their annual conference is called Doris Day, and I told this to my students, and they looked at me like who's Doris Day?

MR. SCHWARZ: That's good. So -- but do you know whether the records of prior Quadrennial
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Commissions have been preserved and are available in the Doris Day?

MR. RUSSIANOFF: No. But I'll ask.

MR. SCHWARZ: Well, if you could ask, and then write us a letter, that would be good. That would be helpful.

MR. RUSSIANOFF: I will follow up.

MR. SCHWARZ: So, Jill, do you have anything further?

MS. BRIGHT: No.

MR. QUINTERO: Just because it was commend on earlier, a lot of the focus has been on the Council in this particular case.

We heard earlier about borough presidents, advocates, and we have to look at all the elected. I guess my question is, from the perspective of scope, responsibility, breadth of managerial complexity, would you give us your sense of the offices that have the most and those that have the least, because that has to be something that we have to consider.

MR. RUSSIANOFF: Well, I'm trying to think of a way to answer that question without getting in trouble with a number of elected officials.
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MS. BRIGHT: This is where you're outspoken.

MR. SCHWARZ: And your preceding colleague was willing to answer that question.

MR. RUSSIANOFF: I think we have a different view on the public advocate, which we have always strongly supported, despite criticisms that the office was make weight, and I think time has proven it to be a place that people can go to that can't go to other levels, other individuals in government.

So, I think we -- you know, and, you know, that puts us on a level of considering, you know, I think the Mayor and the controller probably have the two toughest jobs in city government. I think the controller supervises 800 people.

And the Mayor, you know, in my work I get a glimpse from time of time of what life is like at City Hall. And there was a big to-do about the city funding of mass transit, and we really pushed the administration to, you know, give more money to what's the city's most valuable piece of physical infrastructure -- a transit system that would cost a trillion dollars to replace.

And in talking to his staff -- I'll probably get in trouble -- I got a sense that they, it
was, there was just a ton that they didn't know
about the subject, and it was just, like, one of
many that they had to deal with in the course of
the day.

And so, I think it's truest for the Mayor,
but it's also truest for the Controller, who, you
know, has huge statutory responsibility.

And, you know, I'm trying to supply the
borough presidents without -- the Council
Members, it varies. You know, you meet them and
some of them are, like, um, you know, real
students of government who have goals. They want
the city to adopt a certain policies, and they
know that getting from A to B isn't that easy;
so, they devise a political strategy, and they
get allies in the administration, and those
people are every bit as talented and, and bring
something real to city government that's the
other officials.

And borough presidents, it varies. Some are
really good, and some are not.

MR. SCHWARZ: Gene, let me ask you, let me
state a statistic we have developed, and then ask
you to react to it.

We've looked at the changes in compensation
for all city officials from 1983 to date. And then we looked at comparing the growth in salary between 1983 and 2015. And for the Mayor and Comptroller it was about 103 percent. And for the borough presidents, it was 100 percent. So, without focusing on any individuals now in office, does that, do those numbers surprise you?

MR. RUSSIANOFF: Um, I'm thinking like I should have a pencil and paper and write them down and stare at them. I don't have a reaction on it up here; it's something I could think about. You know, my experience before the 1989 Carter Commission, the borough presidents were a huge embarrassment for the city. And they were all, we thought that they were begat, they didn't actually run for office, that Abe Stark begat Howard Golden, begat -- you know, it was a non-democratic insertion of people with limited qualifications for those jobs.

You know, we recently saw a reoccurrence of that event with the replacement for a DA, Robert Johnson in the Bronx, where they, where he resigned, so that only a committee out of vacancies could replace him, and they picked someone who I don't know, so I can't form a
judgment of her, but in the process stung. And, you know, I think that clouded the borough presidents for years. They all came out of this begetting process. And, you know, I think some of them are, you know, first-rate advocates for their borough, and very effective ones.

And I'm one who believes that that office has a role in ensuring that city government, you know, think about it, you know, all five boroughs.

So, I don't know if that answered your question, but, um, there are borough presidents I really like and respect -- you know, it isn't like I roll my eyes, you know, when we have a meeting with them. I -- you know, some of them are very sharp.

MS. BRIGHT: Just to help you avoid your calculators, irrespective of the numbers, I think the message was that the trend was so similar in growth and compensation. So, if you think about those roles, is that surprising to you? Do you have a comment on that?

MR. RUSSIANOFF: Well, it's not surprising to me that a political process begat a solution that treated them all relatively equal.
I think there was probably a lot of pressure on them during the years that these things were under consideration to not stiff, you know, a particular office. So, you know, the political calculations, you know, that's the way I would have guessed the math would have gone.

MR. SCHWARZ: So, you know, we can't, our job is not to evaluate political, particular officials, but to value the offices. And so, leaving out quality of A and B versus C and D, do you think that it's valuable to have, and leaving out what the pay is, that it's valuable to have an office of Borough President that's between the Mayor representing the whole city and the Council people representing a relatively small --

MR. RUSSIANOFF: Yes. We supported the '89 Carter, and we've worked with a lot of the borough presidents on projects, and my organization has chapters in about eight city schools, Brooklyn College, or Queens College, or Hunter, and College of Staten Island.

And so, we talked, we work cooperatively with the borough presidents, for example, to get additional routes to campus -- and, you know, those experiences have, by and large, been really
good ones. You know?

There was once a borough president in the Bronx, um, and a train station burned down because vandals set it on fire, and we couldn't get anything to get him interested in this subject. I don't know why. And we worked with all of the community groups, and then he was replaced a couple years later with a Borough President who was eager to be in the middle of those fights, and pressed us for ideas.

So, meaning to answer your question, I think the current structure of city government is one that I think is, works for the city -- you know, a big, sprawling, difficult, contentious city, um, and, you know, I think losing that level, you know, giving that responsibility to the Council delegation, would not have been a wise move.

And, you know, I know Marty Markowitz was my borough president for 12 years, and my wife worked on his re-election campaign, and he took a lot of heat for being a kind of expansive, you know, jubilant, hello Brooklyn kind of guy. And he contributed enormously to what's -- you can see it all around us in the school, you know -- this change that's almost as dramatic as the ones
you see in neighborhoods in Manhattan.

So, and, you know, it's a mixed bag, but, you know, I think if you weren't there, things would have happened more slowly -- or, in some cases, not at all. And, you know, he was doing what he was elected to do.

MR. SCHWARZ: Okay. So, any questions?

MS. BRIGHT: No.

MR. SCHWARZ: Thank you, Gene.

MR. RUSSIANOFF: Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

MR. SCHWARZ: So -- why wouldn't we?

And is there anyone else here to testify after the three witnesses who we've had?

Yes.

MS. SANFELIU: Good evening to you. Good evening, everyone. My name is Josefina Sanfeliu. I've lived in Brooklyn since 1992. I grew up in Manhattan. I was born in Cuba. And my family came to America to get gold off the streets. And I retired from working at a nonprofit last summer, a year ago.

So, I have time to attend public hearings more, almost as much as I would like to.

Number 1, I hope that you repeat the Website
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that you mentioned before. Um --

MR. SCHWARZ: What do you mean "repeat"?

MS. SANFELIU: Repeat the name of the Website.

MR. SCHWARZ: Oh, okay.

MS. SANFELIU: To exchange comments.

MR. SCHWARZ: Could someone do that, so the witness can write it down.

MR. QUINTERO: NYC dot gov, forward slash, um, I think it's QuadComm, all one word.

MR. SCHWARZ: And we're trying to put on that Website information that's never been published by a prior Commission. Um, we're trying, we are putting on that Website, um, all our research, we're putting on that Website materials that in prior commissions were provided to the Commission, and the public never saw it until the final report of the Commission. And we reached the conclusion that having an open and transparent process was better for the public and better for us, too, because we can get reactions, if any, and we'd like to get more reactions to things, but it's better for us, as well as for the public.

MS. SANFELIU: I will react. Um, I
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encourage you to publicize your work, your
time, your hearings, your reports, in more
than English.

I came in late. I heard Mr. -- two of the
speakers before. I think the young lady was
fabulous. And now I'm going to make my own
comments about the City Council.

Where I live, my current councilman,
councilperson, is Brad Lander. Previously, it
was Bill DeBlasio, the current Mayor.
And I am familiar with the council committee of
fire and criminal justice committee, because
after Nine Eleven, and also after 2002, um, 2003,
when Mayor Bloomberg closed the fire companies,
engine fire companies, I became really interested
in where my tax money goes and what I have to say
about it. And so, that is the committee that I
have most interest, an interest in.

So, for the -- and I've jotted notes. I
don't have anything prepared.

For your, for the question of whether
Council people or elected people should be,
should retain their previous career, which is the
history which I was taught of American
representation, I have a mixed reaction. I have
a mixed opinion about it.

If I was to be elected councilperson, I think I would have so much to do, I hope I would have so much to do that I wouldn't have time to do anything else. That's it.

Maybe make notes about what to do after I retired from that position in a term limited to eight years in that specific job.

Um, I do appreciate that people bring their own history -- their family, their cousins' information, their observations, um, to their position, in -- um, in the council, including the fact that they have to live within a certain region within the district.

Um, on the, on the origin of -- in the history of who, who the citizen representative, which was the original intent, I believe, an admirable intent, at that time, number 1, who was eligible to vote or represent was white men landowners.

MR. SCHWARZ: That's an extremely important point. And at that time, only white men could vote. In most states, only people with property could vote. And in the country, as a whole, since the government met so seldom, it was very
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common -- in fact, it was uniformly common that
legislators would continue to have another job.
I mean, if you are -- I mean, if your, if the
legislature only met once every two years for a
month, obviously people would have another job.
The question before us is whether, given that the
country today, as you've pointed out, is very
different, should those understandings about the
legislators having another job while they're
sitting in the legislature, should they be
changed.

MS. SANFELIU: I think, historically or
now, -- and I will take the example of George
Washington. If he had to go to attend a
legislature, or whatever, he had people running
his farm. He did not have to be there to milk
the cow. And, in point of fact, George
Washington was a volunteer firefighter, and
related to my interest in fire safety. And I
founded Latinos against FDNY cuts. George
Washington was a volunteer firefighter. The
point of my mentioning that is that he or other
volunteer firefighters had a store, and they
could walk out and throw a bucket of water on a
fire, because somebody was operating the store.
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So, in that sense, they sort of could do both.

Currently, if you're a lawyer, you cannot be in court, clearly; you cannot have clients, and visit and represent them in criminal court, at the same time that you are a legislator passing laws that affect that person.

Which brings me to Miguel Martinez, who was, um, convicted of crimes, committed financial crimes, while he was a City Council person, um, and chair of the fire committee. And perhaps he was distracted, perhaps he didn't want to raise any ruckus to bring attention to himself, but I did not find him particularly, um, invested in fire safety.

Previous to him was Yvette Clark, a current Congressional representative in Brooklyn. Then Martinez, then Vacca, and currently it was Elizabeth Crown. And I have seen that they have different levels of interest in their topic.

And what's most important to me about the councilperson's role in city government is separate. Yes, they pass legislation, but also they balance the Mayor. They balance the power of the Mayor. And when Mr. Bloomberg closed the fire companies, the Council helped sustain the
fundings to some to keep them open, pressured
Bloomberg, and was a balance, a balance as
supposed to be, of a, of a, to the power of the
Mayor, whichever Mayor it would be. They
represent me in a different way. It's a
fascinating, fascinating mechanism.

But to the extent that they balance, or
allow me also to input at a hearing, I have not
gone to fire academy. I am not elected to
anything. But I pay for everybody. And that's
why it's important for me to go to a hearing and
I've gone to the community board, community board
6 locally, and put in my two cents, put in my
observations. I try not to invent anything.

But -- and so, therefore, the hearings and
the committees are very crucial, and I don't
think that they, there should be a separate
compensation for LULUs, because according to --
appointing or not appointing a Council Member to
a bunch of committees can increase their income.

If I appoint you to five committees, you're
going to blank whatever else I say, and if I only
appoint you to one committee, um, you'll be
indifferent. But also you're just making money.
And it's sort of not fair, because I control how
many committees he's on, rather than either pick, volunteer, or whatever else.

MR. SCHWARZ: Could I go back to something that you said earlier, when you referred to the two people who happened to have been your councilperson over the last quite a long period of time, but --

MS. SANFELIU: Within my awareness of politics, yes.

MR. SCHWARZ: But we are not here to try to evaluate particular people, but rather offices. But it would help us if you could recount what kind of experience on what sorts of subjects you had with your Council representatives.

MS. SANFELIU: With them -- I mentioned them specifically to divulge and to be transparent.

MR. SCHWARZ: Yes.

MS. SANFELIU: When I lived in Manhattan I was completely unaware of who it was, what community board. So, I think, um, first of all, there has to be more communication to the public of, of how community boards, of the hearings of this particular hearing; you've got to meet more than four times a year. I mean, once every four years. I'd be happy. That's good stuff with my
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tax money.

I came to meet DeBlasio who also lives, they both live very close to where I live. I met DeBlasio at rallies against closing fire companies. I remember meeting him at rallies in Sunset Park, which is not his district, and I met him at rallies against closing engine 204 at Court Street and DeGraw. And, furthermore, I know that -- and I saw him a couple weeks ago, near where he lived at that time. I know now he's in Gracie Mansion.

But at the day of closing Engine 204 he was arrested. He and Joan Newman, assemblywoman, and other people from the community were arrested. I was not. And I think that's kind of impressive. It shows that somebody is willing to go to, um, some level of discomfort to stand up for what he or she believes.

Um, and I've also met frequently -- I've also met, mentioned borough presidents Marty Markowitz and also Eric Adams. I'll go back to Mr. Lander.

He was at community board 6, um, on the executive committee, I believe, and, um, also attended one of my rallies against company, fire
company closings. So, I have seen their personal participation.

Elizabeth Crowley also came to a rally that I had close to her district.

A simple, in front of a fire company, and we talk to neighbors, and hand out little leaflets, and say you're closing companies at that time, saves each citizen a dollar.

Marty Markowitz came to rallies that I held, and Eric Adams is now, um, trying to get a hospital, a burn unit in Brooklyn, and was familiar with statistics that I provided, and has done other nice works for the elderly, which I'm in that category now, seniors. So, that's how --

MS. BRIGHT: Do you mind? I'm sorry, can I summarize what I think, it would just be helpful for me, actually, more than you. So, I think what we were saying is, what is the role of the Council Member and its importance, and I heard a few things from you.

One is that we might have a closer interaction with that person, if you're a citizen.

Also, you said that there's a balance of power between what the Mayor --
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MS. SANFELIU: Huge.

MS. BRIGHT: -- and what the Council Member would --

And that there's an involvement for the community initiatives. It's at a different level of engagement.

MS. SANFELIU: Yes.

MS. BRIGHT: So, I want to make sure I tie those things back to, in your opinion, are you saying, then, that constitutes a full-time position and should be treated as such, or I just want to -- I want to make sure what you're saying relates to the --

MS. SANFELIU: Yes. The days that I've had my events have always been the Saturday after May 4th -- always the Saturday, always the Saturday after May 4th, which St. Florian's Day, patron of firefighters.

So, they came on their time.

We got publicity, we got photo ops in the newspapers, and so forth. I don't object to that. But they, but their participation highlighted what I was trying to say much more than if my -- sorry, if you came, nobody would really get that worked up about it.
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MS. BRIGHT: So, relative to that, in terms of the scope of their position, their compensation, which are really the things that we're charged with assessing, what --

MS. SANFELIU: Back to my point is the LULUs. I don't believe that they should be getting extra pay for the amount of LULUs, which can be controlled by others in the City Council. This was a strong rumor. This was a particular rumor, um, based on -- sibling rivalry, or something, between Council people, different opinions, or who came into power and so forth. That there was, um, either reward or punishment by awarding, by assigning the LULUs.

MS. BRIGHT: That was your example of I may be on five committees and you may be on one.

MS. SANFELIU: Yes. And you're going to go along with me a lot. And yet, 100 people vote for you, a hundred people voted for you, how is that fair to them, that you have more influence in five committees and then you don't.

And so, therefore, I have been attending committees, and I see the difference of who, whether they are on the way to another committee or not, I see them show up, get signed in, they
get their, and I haven't seen you at the fire
dire committee at all. They get their name
thing, somebody records that they're present.
They have a glass of water and they leave, which
is fine for showing their interest in that
committee. But not here, they're not hearing the
agencies that are speaking. They're not hearing
the fire unions. They're not hearing the Fire
Department management. They're not hearing me
put in my two cents because it's my tax money.
So, they kind of check in, check back out.
I also am familiar with Sarah Gonzalez, who
was in Sunset Park -- on a personal basis.
Just for clarity.

MR. QUINTERO: I think your recommendation
for the elimination of LULUs is clear.
Are there other recommendations that you
would make, in summary?

MS. SANFELIU: I would recommend that your
committee be more, meet more than four times a
year. It seems to me that --

MR. SCHWARZ: More than once every four
years?

A PARTICIPANT: I said it wrong. Every four
years. I looked into finding out about this
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because I read the news events page of the
Uniformed Firefighters Association.

MR. SCHWARZ: Which newspaper do you read?

MS. SANFELIU: A bunch. (Indicating)

But the UFA, the Uniformed Firefighters
Association, which is not the Uniformed
Firefighter Officers Association.

They list the daily news -- the current news
related to fires or fire, fire boat names and so
forth. And they list, I think it was the Daily
News. That's the only thing that I ever, I saw
about you guys. You're maybe on page 12, and
this is, if it's not here, I'm not going to see
it. And it was also in English. And do you

speak Spanish?

A PARTICIPANT: Yes.

MS. SANFELIU: Okay. So, you have two

Spanish speakers affected by how many people?

I'm not asking -- and this isn't -- by
eyeballing, it's really not fair. But there are

a lot of Hispanics in New York. And there is a

lot of other minorities, which -- which these

ain't.

So, you've got to work harder to be seen and

heard, and I like that you're posting your
documents and what people are saying.

MR. SCHWARZ: Well, you're absolutely right, and I'm going to summarize what we've drawn from your testimony, which is very valuable:

To have a citizen describe real life experiences, and that makes, that's very helpful to us. And one other thing which you could do, which I think the court reporter wants to have, if you could just give and spell your name again for the court reporter.

You can do that with him, or you can do it out loud now.

MS. SANFELIU: I'm Josefina Sanfeliu, and I founded Latinos Against FDNY cuts.

MR. SCHWARZ: Okay. So, we thank you very much. It was very valuable, and your testimony, which will be typed up, will be put on our Website, along with all the rest of the testimony we've had so far today. So, thank you again.

A PARTICIPANT: Thank you.

MR. SCHWARZ: Is there another person here to testify?

Okay. There being none, and I couldn't see there, but I assume I don't see anybody. There being none, tomorrow we'll be in Queens. Any of
you are welcome to come again if you want to.

Again, it’s at 5 o’clock at CUNY Law School, Two Court Square in Long Island City, Queens.

Okay. So, we thank you, everybody, for appearing.

(Whereupon, at 7:15 P.M., the above matter concluded.)

I, ROBERT X. SHAW, CSR, a Notary Public for and within the State of New York, do hereby certify that the above is a correct transcription of my stenographic notes.

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