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2018 NYC CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION  
PUBLIC HEARING

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MCKEE HIGHSCHOOL  
290 St. Marks Place, Auditorium  
Staten Island, New York 10301

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6

July 31, 2018  
6:30 P.M.

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10 A P P E A R A N C E S:

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13 COMMISSIONERS:

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15 CARLO SCISSURA , Chair

16 UNA CLARKE

17 MARCO CARRION

18 WENDY WEISER

19 DALE HO

20 MENDY MIROCZNIK

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1 MR. SCISSURA: Okay. Good evening  
2 everybody. It's a pleasure to be here. I'm  
3 going to call the meeting to order and remind  
4 everyone that given that we are not taking any  
5 official action this evening a quorum is not  
6 necessary.

7 So my name is Carlo Scissura. I'm proud to  
8 serve as the secretary of the Charter Commission  
9 and it's my honor to chair this evening's  
10 meeting.

11 And it's very exciting to be in Staten  
12 Island. I live right over the bridge in Bay  
13 Ridge Brooklyn so I feel like I am a little bit  
14 part of Staten Island now.

15 To my right, I'm going to ask our  
16 commissioners to introduce themselves but why  
17 don't we start with you since you are from Staten  
18 Island.

19 MR. MIROCZNIK: Thank you, Carlo.

20 My name is Mendy Mirocznik. I'm the  
21 president of the Council of Jewish Organization  
22 COJO. It's a great honor to serve on the  
23 Commission. It's a great honor for the  
24 Commission to come out to our borough.

25 And Carlo, Bay Ridge is considered the

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1 suburb of Staten Island. It used to be that  
2 Staten Island was considered a suburb of Brooklyn  
3 but not anymore.

4 MS. WEISER: Good evening. My name is Wendy  
5 Weiser I direct the democracy program at the  
6 Putnam Center for Justice at NYU Law School. And  
7 it is a real pleasure to be here in Staten Island  
8 tonight and to see all of you taking time out to  
9 engage civically with the Commission.

10 MR. CARRION: Good evening, everyone. My  
11 name is Marco Carrion. I currently serve as the  
12 commissioner of the Mayor's Community Affairs  
13 Unit and it's great being here in Staten Island.

14 DR. CLARKE: Good afternoon. My name is Una  
15 Clarke. I'm a former educational consultant for  
16 the City of New York Agency For Child Development  
17 for all of Staten Island in the early days of  
18 Head Start and daycare. I'm a former member of  
19 the New York City Council. And I'm a creature of  
20 the Charter Revision of 1989 when the -- when the  
21 City Council was expanded from 35 to 51 I became  
22 the 51st member. Thank you.

23 MR. SCISSURA: Thank you, Dr. Clarke.

24 So tonight is the last of five public  
25 hearings that we are holding in each of the five

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1           boroughs. This also happens to be the location  
2           where we held our first public hearing. It seems  
3           like a long time ago but it wasn't that long ago.  
4           If you wish to testify, please sign -- excuse me  
5           -- please sign at the welcome table.

6           Every mayor has the opportunity to appoint a  
7           Charter Revision Commission to review the city's  
8           Charter. Essentially which is the city's  
9           constitution. Our role as members of the Charter  
10          Commission is to listen to the public, to hear  
11          testimony both orally and written and come up  
12          with recommendations that will amend the Charter.  
13          These recommendations will be presented to the  
14          voters in November at the general election and  
15          the voters will be able to vote if they want the  
16          changes or if they do not. Now, we have  
17          conducted extensive outreach in preparation for  
18          not just opportunity but all of our hearings and  
19          do want to thank the staff for all the works  
20          they've done on this Commission. We have  
21          followed all required notice procedures we posted  
22          public notice in city record. Obviously on the  
23          commission's website we sent e-blasts to  
24          thousands of New Yorkers, notices has been in  
25          every mayor New York City media outlet ethnic and

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1 community news outlets, community boards and  
2 community groups, elected officials and so on.

3 This meeting is being live streamed at  
4 NYC.gov/Charter. Videos and transcripts from our  
5 prior meetings and hearings are visible on our  
6 website. Tonight we have sign language  
7 interpreters and loop listening devices  
8 available. We also have Spanish language  
9 interpreters and headsets available so you can  
10 listen to the hearings or testify in pan issue.  
11 To tonight's meetings is open for anyone who  
12 wishes to speak. Tonight is about the Charter.  
13 We reviewed the entire Charter and we welcome  
14 your comments on any aspect of the Charter.  
15 However, this is the stage of the process where  
16 we try and narrow down the focus because, as we  
17 said, the Charter is very large.

18 Last week we released our preliminary staff  
19 report which is available on our website  
20 NYC.gov/charter. You will also find the  
21 executive summary of the report which has been  
22 translated into ten languages.

23 We are seeking public feedback for this  
24 preliminary staff report and we particularly  
25 invite comments on the five areas of focus that

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1 we've heard a lot about and that are described in  
2 the report: One, campaign finance reforms, two,  
3 elections in New York City. Three, civic  
4 engagement, four, the role of community boards,  
5 and five the redistricting process. If you wish  
6 to speak as I mentioned please sign up at the  
7 table.

8 The way we will do it is we will take  
9 testimony for three minutes. We will do panels  
10 of two people at a time so I will call two people  
11 at a time to come up and introduce yourselves and  
12 you will have three minutes. And we will be  
13 tight on the three minutes so that everyone will  
14 have an opportunity to speak.

15 Obviously, no matter what time you arrive if  
16 the hearing is still going on we will be allowing  
17 you to speak. So I think the great thing about  
18 this process has been the public engagement, the  
19 public participation and the openness of the  
20 dialogue.

21 We've heard many, many different  
22 testimonies. Not just relating, by the way, to  
23 the City Charter. We've heard just in Staten  
24 Island at our first meeting issues about  
25 affordable housing and different things. So it's

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1           been wonderful to hear what's on New Yorkers'  
2           minds. And even though they are not apart of the  
3           Charter Revision it's important that we, as  
4           community officials, know what's going on in the  
5           city and that your voice has been able to be  
6           heard. You've been able to testify and there is  
7           a record of the concerns that you share. And  
8           that's be something very exciting.

9                        So with that, before I begin, I do want to  
10           recognize the regional director for  
11           Intergovernmental and Community Affairs For State  
12           Control, Tom DiNapoli, Daniel Nurse. Thank you  
13           for being us -- with us. Give the comptroller  
14           our regards.

15                      Okay. I'm going to call two people at a  
16           time. You will testify and then if there are any  
17           questions from the panel we will take it from  
18           there.

19                      So the first two speakers are Douglas  
20           Kellner and Mary Luke. And the next panel will  
21           be Alice Underwood and Michael Parsons.

22                      Good evening.

23                      MR. KELLNER: Good evening. My name is  
24           Douglas Kellner and I'm co-chair and one of the  
25           four commissioners of the New York State Board of

1 Elections.

2 Obviously my remarks tonight are my own and  
3 not official policy of Board of Elections but  
4 I've come here tonight to primarily speak on  
5 ranked choice voting and to support ranked choice  
6 voting. I read your analysis in the preliminary  
7 report which I thought was very good and a very  
8 fair analysis of the issues.

9 I think that my first priority is that the  
10 current system of the city-wide runoff primary  
11 election two weeks after the initial primary  
12 election is unworkable and fraught with potential  
13 problems and is unduly expensive. And that it  
14 should be a priority to eliminate that runoff  
15 primary election. The best way to resolve that  
16 issue is to have instant runoff voting so we can  
17 preserve the purpose behind that runoff without  
18 going through the incredible difficulties faced  
19 by the New York City Board of Elections in trying  
20 to manage that runoff primary election in such a  
21 short window. And the very substantial expense  
22 incurred in running that primary election.

23 The numbers involved in running a runoff  
24 primary election vary mainly because of so many  
25 costs that are not direct costs of the New York

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1 City Board of Elections. The direct cost of the  
2 New York City Board of Elections are usually  
3 estimated at between ten and \$12 million for a  
4 runoff primary election but you also have the  
5 cost of police overtime, the cost of the board of  
6 education and others involved in it.

7 Another issue I want to focus on, is that  
8 technically it's very doable to implement,  
9 instant runoff voting. Minneapolis uses the same  
10 voting machines that New York City uses. The  
11 cost of adding on the algorithm for instant  
12 runoff voting is less than a million dollars  
13 which is easily recouped the first time you don't  
14 have a city-wide runoff election.

15 I personally favor using it for all  
16 municipal primary elections but certainly  
17 replacing the current runoff with the city wide  
18 is a priority. And so --

19 MR. SCISSURA: I hear a beep --

20 MR. KELLNER: I know my time is up.

21 MR. SCISSURA: Time is up. Okay.

22 MS. LUKE: Thank you very much, honorable  
23 commissioners for hearing our testimony. My name  
24 is Mary Luke and I'm co-chair of the steering  
25 committee of the New York City For CEDAW

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1 Coalition and I'm also president of the Metro New  
2 York Chapter of the U.S. NC for UN women.

3 So I'm here to speak on behalf of CEDAW, the  
4 Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of  
5 Discrimination Against Women. Our recognized  
6 international human rights treaty that has been  
7 approved by 179 countries and the United States  
8 not being one of them. I speak to the issue of  
9 civic participation of all people. Women, men,  
10 transgender people, gender nonconforming people,  
11 and recognizing that New York City law recognizes  
12 the diversity of gender but we also want to  
13 recognize intersectionality and all forms of  
14 discrimination.

15 We're very pleased that the mayor has just  
16 released to the UN a report on social development  
17 in New York City becoming the first city in New  
18 York to do so and he states that New York is on  
19 track to become one of the more equitable  
20 healthier and safer cities in the world due to  
21 our latest achievements in sustainability and  
22 increase commitment to fight for social and  
23 economic progress.

24 And I say that in order for New York City to  
25 achieve its goals it really must adopt CEDAW as a

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1 human rights framework and that this should be  
2 reflected as a basic tenant in the City Charter.  
3 We recognize that all issues are women's issues  
4 and that although the city has done very well in  
5 terms of gender equality economic development  
6 there's still much more that needs to be done  
7 especially for disenfranchised people.

8 So we really strongly encourage the City  
9 Charter Commission to include CEDAW in a human  
10 rights framework as part of the principles that  
11 underline the whole city Commission. Thank you  
12 very much.

13 MR. SCISSURA: Thank you very much.

14 Any questions or comments?

15 MS. WEISER: Thank you both for testifying.

16 So my questions are directed to Mr. Kellner  
17 and thank you so much for coming out and talking  
18 to us in support of ranked choice voting. And  
19 we've -- I'll start with -- is your -- do you  
20 have a recommendation as to whether or not this  
21 should be applied to all races or only a subset  
22 of races for the instant runoff voting?

23 MR. KELLNER: I think it would be simpler if  
24 you applied it to all municipal races. It's true  
25 that in the odd year when you have municipal

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1 races there would still be some races for state  
2 offices such as district attorney and judges  
3 which the City Charter cannot change to ranked  
4 choice voting. But I think it would be simpler  
5 if all of the primaries were City Council,  
6 borough president and city wide offices used  
7 ranked choice voting.

8 MS. WEISER: Great. So my second follow-up  
9 question that you wrote that this leads to is  
10 we've heard a lot of testimony in support of  
11 instant runoff voting about its benefits its cost  
12 savings and its potential turnout benefits and  
13 ability to expand the slate of candidates.

14 Now, we've also heard a lot of testimony and  
15 have seen written testimony on its workability.  
16 Several people have raised questions on this  
17 Commission about whether or not it would be  
18 confusing for voters. And in your position as a  
19 Commission of the Board of Elections I would be  
20 interested in your view as to when the cases  
21 where there might be different kinds of races  
22 whether it would be confusing and what it would  
23 take to alleviate any confusion.

24 MR. KELLNER: Well, I think your preliminary  
25 report fairly analyzes the issues. You look at

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1 the jurisdictions and there are many of them  
2 throughout the country that have introduced  
3 ranked choice voting. And I think my experience  
4 in reviewing them is a very positive one,  
5 especially how it changes the dynamic of  
6 campaigns.

7 Obviously you have to invest some money in  
8 voter education. But again, the amount of  
9 expense in voter education is just a small  
10 fraction of what you would spend for a city-wide  
11 runoff primary election.

12 MS. WEISER: Thank you. That answers my  
13 question.

14 MR. SCISSURA: Great. Thank you.

15 We've also been joined by another  
16 commissioner.

17 Dale, if you want to introduce yourself.

18 MR. HO: Good evening. My apologies for  
19 running a bit late. My name is Dale Ho. I'm a  
20 lawyer of the American Civil Liberties Union.  
21 I'm glad to be here. Thank you all very much for  
22 coming out tonight.

23 MR. SCISSURA: Thank you. Thank you very  
24 much.

25 I'm going to call up the next panel and we

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1 actually will do three people on a panel.

2 Alice Underwood, Michael Parsons and Yvonne  
3 O'Neil.

4 MS. UNDERWOOD: Hi, my name is Alice  
5 Underwood and I have lived, paid taxes and voted  
6 in New York City for almost 20 years. I'm also a  
7 volunteer board member of an organization called  
8 FairVote.

9 And I would also like to speak to the issue  
10 of ranked choice voting or instant runoff voting.  
11 The first thing I'd like to say about it is it's  
12 really easy. It's a system that people use all  
13 the time. It may not be called out to you but  
14 just by saying here's my first choice, here's my  
15 second choice I think it's very easy to explain  
16 to people how to do it. And as we've heard in  
17 the previous panel it has a number of benefits it  
18 can help to improve the voter turnout, save a  
19 huge amount of taxpayer money, and it rewards  
20 candidates to reach out more broadly so I would  
21 like to strongly urge the Charter Commission to  
22 take the action to adopt this as a  
23 recommendation.

24 As we've said, New York City has the right  
25 to adopt instant runoff voting or ranked choice

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1 voting as a Charter amendment. And as  
2 Mr. Kellner explained, it can save us upwards to  
3 \$10 million each time by not having to have that  
4 runoff election. The current voting equipment  
5 that we use requires only the modest software  
6 upgrade as it's been discussed.

7 And with that. I'd just like to say that a  
8 system that can help more people express their  
9 true choice, that is, would encourage candidates  
10 to reach out more broadly and connect with more  
11 voters has benefits well beyond the cost savings.  
12 Those votes are quite significant. It really  
13 will help to encourage civic engagement and make  
14 our elections something that would -- that people  
15 feel proud to participate in. Thank you.

16 MR. SCISSURA: Thank you.

17 MR. PARSONS: Hi, my name is Michael  
18 Parsons. I'm --

19 MR. SCISSURA: Can you just move that closer  
20 to you, Mr. Parsons. Hold on. We're going to  
21 get you a better chair.

22 MR. PARSON: That's all right. I can just  
23 move in here.

24 MR. SCISSURA: You could maybe move the  
25 table up a little bit so you're not...

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1 MR. PARSONS: Thank you. Thank you, again.  
2 My name is Michael Parsons. I'm an acting  
3 assistant professor at NYU Law as well as an  
4 adjunct fellow FairVote.

5 I wanted to come here today because I think  
6 there's a lot of engagement on this issue a lot  
7 of popular support on this issue. We're living  
8 in a time when I think people are very interested  
9 in structural issues like money and politics,  
10 gerrymandering. Some of these things that  
11 sometimes don't get noticed but fundamentally  
12 influence our democracy and the kind of outputs  
13 we have as well as the process we have. And I  
14 think that to reward that engagement would be  
15 useful.

16 I think also that we've heard a lot about  
17 some of the financial costs of the runoff system  
18 and how it would benefit to go to a ranked choice  
19 voting system. I think there are also democratic  
20 costs with the current system we need to consider  
21 which is a lot of runoffs tend to end up being  
22 eschewed wider and eschewed more affluent than  
23 the general first election and so this is  
24 something that could potentially create more  
25 opportunities for communities of color, for

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1 candidates of color, for women. And so this is I  
2 think something that could expand out.

3 But I was happy to see in the staff report  
4 that the Commission has retained someone to look  
5 into issues like this because they're vital and I  
6 think that we've seen -- and in a lot of  
7 localities, for example in the bay area, we've  
8 seen great turn out in terms of candidates of  
9 color, communities of color having better  
10 results. And so if that's indicative of what  
11 could be possible I think that that's well worth  
12 the investment in just new equipment in order to  
13 further improve our democracy.

14 Also, in terms of turnout, generally, I know  
15 that the staff report indicated that they were  
16 interested in the impact on turnout generally.  
17 And I think that we've seen in Maine with the  
18 first statewide race as well as in localities  
19 over the past few elections increased interests,  
20 increased turnout which I think makes sense. I  
21 think a lot of people who don't feel they're  
22 really heard in the process there is an  
23 opportunity to actually be heard.

24 Whether or not they're, you know, real  
25 preferred candidates ends up being the one who

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1 wins, they have a chance to have an impact  
2 further down the line so you don't have, you  
3 know, these spoiler effects systems where if  
4 you're interested in a third-party candidate you  
5 feel like this election isn't for you and you  
6 have to choose the least bad option. You can  
7 choose the option you like and then you know, for  
8 your second ranking you can choose the option who  
9 would be somebody you might be forced to choose  
10 otherwise in the existing system. So obviously  
11 there are lots of financial costs to consider and  
12 advancing that I think would come from  
13 eliminating a runoff and moving to ranked choice  
14 voting but I think the current system imposes a  
15 lot of democratic costs on our communities right  
16 now and so to be able to improve the system, you  
17 know in this fashion I think would be useful.  
18 Thank you.

19 MR. SCISSURA: Thank you.

20 MS. O'NEIL: Good evening. My name is  
21 Yvonne O'Neil and I want to thank the honorable  
22 commissioners for having another opportunity to  
23 address you.

24 I represent NYC for CEDAW. My colleagues  
25 and I have been coming to these hearings because

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1 we wish to have the principles of CEDAW, that is  
2 the Convention and Elimination of All Forms of  
3 Discrimination Against Women, as its incorporated  
4 into the revised City Charter. This evening I  
5 want to make a small case for three issues:  
6 Gender main streaming and public policies and  
7 programs undertaken by the city; two, gender  
8 party and appointments to commissions; and three,  
9 gender responsive budgeting.

10 On gender main streaming, first women --  
11 women's as well as men's concerns and experiences  
12 must be integral to the design implementation  
13 monitoring and evaluation of all policies and  
14 programs. Given gender differences and  
15 inequalities within societies it cannot be  
16 assumed that women and men will have equal  
17 opportunity. Special attention to the needs and  
18 priority of women and girls is greatly needed to  
19 avoid unintentionally increasing gender  
20 inequality. And equality between women and men  
21 is a matter of human rights and social justice.

22 On gender party and appointments to  
23 commissions, achieving gender party is an urgent  
24 priority not only as a basic human right but also  
25 as it is essential to organizations' efficiency

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1 impact and credibility. It's important to create  
2 a working environment at all levels that embraces  
3 equality, eradicates bias, and is inclusive.

4 According to the World of Economic Forum, a  
5 variety of models and empirical studies have  
6 suggested that improving gender parity is a  
7 result in significant economic dividends which  
8 vary dependent on the situation of different  
9 economies and the specific challenges they're  
10 facing.

11 Notable recent estimates suggest that  
12 economic gender parity could add an additional  
13 \$250 billion to the GDP of the United Kingdom,  
14 1,750 to that dollar -- billion dollars to that  
15 of the United States and \$320 billion to France  
16 and \$310 billion to the GDP of Germany. Other  
17 recent estimates suggest that China could use --  
18 could see a U.S. 2.5 trillion GDP increase from  
19 gender parity and that the world as a whole could  
20 increase global GDP by 5.3 trillion by 2025 by  
21 closing the gender gap in economic participation  
22 by 25 percent over the same period. Imagine what  
23 gender parity holds for New York City. As I  
24 mentioned on Thursday gender response of  
25 budgeting is not about creating separate budgets

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1 for women by solely increasing spending of  
2 women's programs.

3 Rather gender responsive budget seeks to  
4 ensure that the collection in allocation of  
5 public resources is carried out in ways that's  
6 effective and contribute to advance in gender  
7 equality -- gender equality and women's  
8 empowerment. It should be based on in-depth  
9 analysis that identifies the effective --

10 MR. SCISSURA: If you could rap up. Your  
11 three minutes are up.

12 MS. O'NEIL: Well, I just want to say that I  
13 want to thank you for this opportunity and  
14 together let us work to make our beloved city the  
15 preeminent CEDAW city in the United States.

16 MR. SCISSURA: Thank you very much.

17 Any questions or comments?

18 (No response. )

19 MR. SCISSURA: Hearing none, I want to thank  
20 you for coming out tonight. The next three  
21 speakers will be Sheila Katzman, Howard Katzman  
22 and Daniel looks like Chilton. What is it?  
23 Chilton. So Sheila Katzman, Howard Katzman and  
24 Daniel Chilton.

25 MS. KATZMAN: Good evening. I am Sheila

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1           Katzman. The chair for New York City for CEDAW.  
2           I am also the president of the international  
3           association for women in radio and television and  
4           I'm a retiree of United Nations. Thank you for  
5           the opportunity to testify before you again  
6           because we're very much want this opportunity to  
7           do the right thing, making the global local.

8                         We're asking the New York City Charter  
9           Review Commission to consider our cause -- New  
10          York City -- for New York City to implement the  
11          process that makes CEDAW a priority for all  
12          review deliberations. Reviewing the City Charter  
13          at this time gives us the opportunity of making  
14          rights real. Yes, we should keep what is  
15          working. However, we should change or amend  
16          those laws and the policies that are not working  
17          properly for the progress of this great city as  
18          so much has changed since the Charter review of  
19          1989. For example, who could have comprehended  
20          public recognition of same sex marriage and how  
21          important it is to recognize transgender and  
22          conforming gender.

23                         I would like to thank you for holding these  
24          hearings and raising these important issues of  
25          community boards and the other areas of focus.

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1 Race and discrimination of inequality must also  
2 be on the agenda.

3 I call for the Commission to ensure that the  
4 revised Charter should be grounded in human  
5 rights principles as its foundation including  
6 equity and inclusion and utilize right space  
7 definition such as those laid out in CEDAW.

8 The inclusion should assess gender race  
9 discrimination and equality where they converge  
10 rather than separately and address the  
11 intersection of these with other identities  
12 including but not limited to sexual orientation,  
13 religion, ability, ethnicity, nationality, class,  
14 age and legal status contain a strong  
15 implementation plan that is funded for the  
16 implemented and includes adequate resources for  
17 positive results. The Commission must ensure  
18 public engagement in the process of the gender  
19 Commission and the public's voices are heard and  
20 their concern are taken into consideration.

21 I bring the CEDAW rights -- this CEDAW's  
22 rights base framework you based on successes of  
23 San Francisco and Los Angeles. These laws being  
24 based on CEDAW principal have resulted in  
25 44 months without a single domestic violence

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1 homicide gender equality principles initiative  
2 which range from employment and compensation to  
3 supply chain practices and support more  
4 productive work place for women and men.

5 MR. SCISSURA: Your time is up.

6 MS. KATZMAN: I felt the hand going --

7 MR. SCISSURA: Thank you very much. And  
8 it's good to see you again.

9 MS. KATZMAN: Thank you. Same here.

10 MR. CHILTON: Hi, my name is Daniel Chilton  
11 and I've been a proponent of ranked choice voting  
12 for about 30 years. I'm a member of the Staten  
13 Island Progressive Action Network where we've  
14 adopted ranked choice voting, used ranked choice  
15 voting and if you learn anything from me tonight  
16 it's not all instant runoff is ranked choice  
17 voting and I'm going to hit that really hard.

18 A lot of people have spoken very eloquently  
19 about the cost savings and how it's more engaging  
20 and you don't have to show up to the polls twice  
21 but there are other benefits.

22 A couple months ago I went to my democratic  
23 club and did a lovely presentation of the merits  
24 of the various systems and the short comings of  
25 the existing systems. After one of the people

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1 have a chance to actually use ranked choice  
2 voting. He said to me, "Damn, ranked choice  
3 voting is easy."

4 So explaining it is hard, especially the  
5 relative merits. So there's really only  
6 two points I want to make tonight because I think  
7 others have done such a great job of it. Ranked  
8 choice voting, if you do it right, eliminates the  
9 spoiler effect. That is to say you can vote for  
10 a dark horse candidate and your vote still  
11 matters. If he's the last place contender and he  
12 only gets two percent of the vote, your second  
13 choice counts so you can feel free to vote for  
14 your conscious which is extremely important.

15 But if you go down the wrong road and think  
16 that all instant runoff is ranked choice voting  
17 you're wrong and you'll be misleading people. So  
18 I want to make sure that you understand hat  
19 ranked choice voting or ranking your vote could  
20 be a two-round system where the top two are  
21 selected and then the top two in the second round  
22 make the final choice and you would be lying to  
23 them if you said that this eliminates the spoiler  
24 effect because the spoiler effect would be  
25 present.

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1           Ranked choice voting, if you do it properly,  
2           has multiple rounds and eliminates the least  
3           popular candidate and your votes could reach  
4           their second choice that's reattributed until  
5           there's a majority winner. What we do in New  
6           York State and in other places is you pick the  
7           top two and then they run against each other.  
8           All the second, third and fourth place votes get  
9           tossed out because this tool they got.

10           Let's say there was a four-way race. One  
11           guy got 26 percent the other got 27 percent and  
12           the others got 24 and 23 percent. You're going  
13           to pick two of those and only two of them  
14           eligible for the next round, the final round, the  
15           -- I'm almost done. The final round.

16           So please be really clear in your minds that  
17           ranked choice vote is not any old instant runoff  
18           voting. And I'm done.

19           MR. SCISSURA: Thank you. Right on queue.

20           MR. CHILTON: Thank you.

21           MR. KATZMAN: Good evening. I'm going to  
22           talk about government and civic engagement  
23           through gender -- adding gender lens to the  
24           Charter.

25           My name is Howard Katzman. I represent the

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1 New York City For CEDAW Coalition, a city's  
2 initiative ensuring that New York City explicitly  
3 recognizes the affect on women and gender on all  
4 its actions. I am policy and strategy on the  
5 steering committee.

6 New York City for CEDAW does represent the  
7 community and coalition. When we held the  
8 daytime news conference on the steps of City Hall  
9 over 200 people participated. Over 100  
10 organizations were present. The diversity of  
11 gender, women, men, LGBTQ, gender nonconforming,  
12 the diversity of age, ethnicity, race. Our  
13 coalition of over 300 organizations has spent  
14 over four years listening to the community and to  
15 government leaders to accept this initiative.

16 January 2016, over 400,000 New Yorkers  
17 marched for gender justice. The next year over  
18 two hundred thousand New Yorkers again marched.  
19 Since then we've seen the Me To Movement take  
20 hold and question the ways we interact. Our  
21 awareness of gender justice has been growing in  
22 the last two years leaving business as usual no  
23 longer acceptable.

24 New York City also needs to raise its  
25 awareness. How do our policies, funding and

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1 employment practices affect gender? Do we only  
2 ask these questions for so called women's issues?  
3 All issues are women's issues, as well as men's  
4 issues, as well as issues of all New York City  
5 residents. We're not used to asking all of these  
6 questions so this initiative helps.

7 CEDAW is an international human rights  
8 treaty dealing with women and gender. The  
9 articles of CEDAW motivate, the objective  
10 questions we need to ask to truly know whether we  
11 are inadvertently discriminating. Then we  
12 include a public component so the government can  
13 receive the assistance of the governed in  
14 formulating solutions. Putting this proposal  
15 into our Charter would be a major step in  
16 becoming aware of how we inadvertently may not be  
17 taking into account the needs of all our  
18 residents equally.

19 MR. SCISSURA: Thank you very much.

20 Any questions or comments.

21 MS. WEISER: I just have one question for  
22 either of the proponents of New York City for  
23 CEDAW.

24 Does that proposal also include implementing  
25 surd or other human rights treaty dealing with

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1 racial equality or is that addressed otherwise in  
2 the Charter?

3 MR. KELLNER: Surd is in some sense racist  
4 but dealt with quite strongly.

5 MS. WEISER: Okay.

6 MR. KATZMAN: And we've also -- it was a  
7 previous council initiative that was talking  
8 about those two things. But the issues of gender  
9 and the issues of race are different. Solutions  
10 are different and to confuse them is to the  
11 detriment of both.

12 MS. WEISER: Thank you.

13 MS. KATZMAN: I think I concur with my  
14 colleague and namesake. But I think that CEDAW  
15 covers everything in a sense that once you do a  
16 gender assessment you will find those disparities  
17 across race, gender, age, religion, ethnicity, et  
18 cetera. It brings everything to the fort.

19 But to back trace what Howard Katzman said,  
20 I would say that we have to go thinking about I  
21 surd as well and what it means and everything  
22 overlapping. And it's very important once we get  
23 CEDAW into place see what comes out of it,  
24 because race was a big factor in San Francisco  
25 and Los Angeles as well.

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1           So it is an all encompassing framework. And  
2           like elastic because you know with all the  
3           different reviews general recommendations that  
4           like the amendment that comes into place with  
5           CEDAW. So it's there to like elastic to move  
6           about and take everything into consideration.

7           Thank you for the question.

8           MS. WEISER: Thank you very much for your  
9           testimony.

10          MR. SCISSURA: Thank you very much. The  
11          next panel is Megan Ahern, Valentin Camano and  
12          Elizabeth Irwin.

13          And I want to remind everyone that the draft  
14          report, the five areas of focus that we will be  
15          looking at are campaign finance reforms,  
16          elections in New York City, civic engagement,  
17          community boards and redistricting.

18          Ms. Ahern, you're up.

19          MS. AHERN: Good evening. My name is Megan  
20          Ahern I'm the program director for the New York  
21          Public Interest Research Group or NYPIRG. So  
22          just to get through my three pages as quickly as  
23          possible summarized a few of our recommendations  
24          but also handed in a larger packet for the  
25          commissioners. Our staff report reacting to your

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1 staff report.

2 So to summarize on campaign finance we  
3 support lowering campaign contribution limits,  
4 increasing the public match, eliminating the cap  
5 on public matching funds and lowering the minimum  
6 requirement to participate in the program and to  
7 briefly expand. We agree with the New York City  
8 campaign finance boards suggestion to lowering  
9 contribution limits from 5,100 to 2,250 for  
10 city-wide offices, 2,950 to 1,750 for borough  
11 offices and 2850 to 1250 for City Council seats  
12 which will help small dollar contributors play an  
13 even larger role in city campaigns, boost  
14 candidate independence and encourage greater  
15 civic participation.

16 We also support the proposal to raise  
17 matching rates from six to one to eight -- from  
18 six to one to eight to one and agree with  
19 Reinvent Albany that the match increase that the  
20 match increase should only be done for small  
21 contributions rather than the first portion than  
22 larger contributions.

23 We also agree with the campaign finance  
24 board to lower the threshold for participating  
25 candidates running for city-wide office. And the

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1 CFP proposes adding a geographic requirement to  
2 get at least 50 contributions from each borough  
3 for city-wide office. We support that and also  
4 think it should be done for borough president  
5 races, also that's supported by the Brennan  
6 Center.

7 The summaries on civic empowerment, New York  
8 City should do all it can to boost through the  
9 work of non-profits that currently administer  
10 programs that encourage greater civic  
11 participation.

12 As you may know, NYPIRG does this. We've  
13 been working for more than 40 years of City  
14 University of New York, or CUNY, and registered  
15 tens of thousands of students. Often new voters  
16 administer unique pier to pier civic experiences.  
17 And these proven successful programs can be a --  
18 can be scaled throughout the city really quickly.

19 I also want to add that we support ranked  
20 choice voting as was talked about extensively  
21 here. And just ditto to all of that. And also I  
22 think the city can work on a felony paroled voter  
23 education campaign to reinstate voter rights and  
24 educate people on parole about their right to  
25 register to vote.

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1 MR. SCISSURA: Thank you very much.

2 Valentin Camano.

3 MR. CAMANO: Good afternoon, your  
4 excellencies and government officials.

5 My name is Valentin Camano. I'm a UN  
6 representative for Man Up campaign. Our  
7 delegation oversees outreach. And it is  
8 important for youth to get involved and have  
9 concrete implementations for CEDAW bill such as  
10 yourselves who have experience and gone through  
11 some kind of form of struggle or challenge to get  
12 where you are.

13 For us, gender lens and human rights  
14 frameworks are important to be included in these  
15 commitments so youth can also get informed and  
16 stay informed because we are following these  
17 transitions and regulations so we can have result  
18 of course of action as well as gain results for  
19 New York to be where it is today on the  
20 international platform as being recognized as the  
21 most cultural diverse country in the United  
22 States of America.

23 Thank you.

24 MR. SCISSURA: Thank you.

25 MS. IRWIN: Good evening, members of the

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1 Charter review Commission and thank you for this  
2 opportunity to speak to you tonight.

3 The international federation of business --

4 MR. SCISSURA: Could you speak closer to the  
5 mike.

6 MS. IRWIN: Closer? Sorry. I hear my voice  
7 clearly.

8 The international federation of business and  
9 professional women represents more than 60,000  
10 members world wide with a politically active  
11 chapter in New York City. My name is Elizabeth  
12 Irwin and I'm a member of the New York Chapter.  
13 A representative to the United Nations to the  
14 chapter as well as an attorney practicing in New  
15 York. I submit these comments on behalf of the  
16 New York Chapter of IFBPW. The New York Chapter  
17 of IFBPW recommends that the Charter review  
18 Commission adopt and implement CEDAW for the City  
19 of New York in order to assess policies through a  
20 gender-based lens providing signature economic  
21 and social benefits for New Yorkers of all  
22 genders by using a gender-based lens. More than  
23 50 percent of New York's populations needs would  
24 be more accurately and mindfully addressed.

25 As you already heard, CEDAW is an

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1 international treaty negotiated and ratified by  
2 189 -- out of 193 countries throughout the world,  
3 with the exception of the United States, and  
4 adopted in 1979 by the UN general assembly.

5 CEDAW, the convention of -- on the  
6 elimination of all forms of discrimination  
7 against women defines what constitutes  
8 discrimination against women and sets an agenda  
9 for national action to end such discrimination.  
10 Specifically implementing CEDAW would require a  
11 gender-based analysis of city operations work  
12 force programs and budget oversight body to  
13 monitor implementation and funding to support the  
14 implementation.

15 City as for CEDAW campaign is a grassroots  
16 initiative to encourage local governments in the  
17 United States to support gender rights by  
18 adopting local ordinances based on CEDAW  
19 principles. It provides a theoretical and  
20 analytical tool to enable local governments to  
21 assess their actions through a gender lens. Nine  
22 cities have adopted CEDAW around the country and  
23 29 cities have strong resolutions moving toward  
24 ordinances and 31 more cities are exploring  
25 resolutions and ordinances. New York as the

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1 leading city of the United States, must take its  
2 place as a leader and promote values of equality  
3 and social justice for all its citizens.

4 For women to fully and equally participate  
5 in society they must be seen. We would like the  
6 New York City Charter review Commission to  
7 resolve that all city programs, all city funding,  
8 and all city employment utilize gender-based  
9 tools and techniques to assess the impact on  
10 women and gender. Adopting a cross agency CEDAW  
11 gender-based lens in San Francisco has resulted  
12 in a 44-month drop in domestic violence homicides  
13 to zero, a gender analysis to the city agency a  
14 family friendly work place ordinance and gender  
15 equalities initiative. We believe that the  
16 effective adopting of CEDAW in New York will  
17 result in a proportionally larger set of economic  
18 and social benefits for the City of New York.

19 MR. SCISSURA: Your time is up.

20 MS. IRWIN: Thank you.

21 MR. SCISSURA: Thank you very much.

22 Any questions or comments?

23 (No response.)

24 MR. SCISSURA: Great. Thank you very much  
25 for being here.

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1 MS. IRWIN: Thank you.

2 MR. SCISSURA: Our next three panelists are  
3 Debra Tangen, Kevin Rizzoli and Brown, Sevonna  
4 Brown.

5 Is Debra Tangen here?

6 MR. SCISSURA: Good evening.

7 MS. TANGEN: Start?

8 MR. SCISSURA: We're ready.

9 MS. TANGEN: Okay. Hi, I'm Debra Tangen.  
10 I've never been to a meeting like this before.  
11 I'm a citizen. I'm a senior citizen now and just  
12 retired and I happen to hear on the radio  
13 yesterday this whole idea of ranked choice voting  
14 and then I heard there's a meeting in Staten  
15 Island. So you're a couple miles away from where  
16 I live. I live in Staten Island so here I am.

17 I think that it's a really great idea. It's  
18 very exciting. One of the things that has really  
19 upset me and really concerned me is the fact that  
20 we have such low voter turn out. You see what  
21 goes on in other countries and what people do to  
22 vote and we take it just for granted and we  
23 really don't have a participatory democracy. And  
24 I do really think that this would help. Not  
25 solve everything but I think it would help.

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1 I think -- also I don't think that it's  
2 going to be too confusing. Us voters are  
3 generally pretty smart and I think that it would  
4 need some money for education but I learned that  
5 we could maybe save ten million with getting away  
6 from the runoff vote so I think that that would  
7 work and I think that would also help with  
8 spoiler issues. Maybe not solve all those but  
9 help with that so I just think it's a really cool  
10 idea and I hope that we can do it.

11 MR. SCISSURA: Thank you.

12 Kevin Rizzoli.

13 MR. RIZZOLI: Thank you, Commissioners, for  
14 giving me the time to speak. I'm the CEO of  
15 Raz-Lo Ranches, a produce and farming company  
16 with the United States of America, a  
17 veteran-owned business. I'm speaking on behalf  
18 of my brothers, growers and receivers of fresh  
19 produce which generates over \$2 billion in  
20 taxable revenue within The City of New York: The  
21 serious violations of implementation of the  
22 Business Integrity Commission in the inception  
23 stages which was started by former mayor Rudolph  
24 Giuliani and has compounded into the losses of  
25 thousands of jobs in the Hunts Point Terminal

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1 Market and several hundred serious violations of  
2 due process of law.

3 Several companies have went bankrupt because  
4 of such act of consorting within the Hunts Point  
5 Terminal Market board of directors which has now  
6 yielded allegedly powered to only one person to  
7 oversee the ID process as he chooses which I  
8 believe is a violation of due process of law  
9 which I don't think our mayor would allow even  
10 though the BIC says it's not going on.

11 The loss of jobs is a serious problem since  
12 \$2 billion of taxable revenue of the sales of  
13 produce is being lost to other states, mainly New  
14 Jersey and Philadelphia which has just opened up,  
15 as you know, several years ago a state of the art  
16 distribution facility in their city.

17 I believe that the serious due process  
18 violations of the United States constitution is  
19 at the council's, how do you say, right and laws  
20 need to be changed in marketing. Such market  
21 producers, delegation of power to one person is a  
22 serious to me violation of due process of law,  
23 which the United States constitution, as being a  
24 veteran and a constitutional of law recipient of  
25 Old Dominion University, which I don't think our

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1 constitution nor New York State's constitution  
2 would tolerate such -- one person making a  
3 decision based upon the fact of giving a business  
4 integrity Commission is not, to me, due process.  
5 One person? No.

6 Evidence has to be produced, hearings have  
7 to be conducted and I believe all sides need to  
8 make an active case against such company's  
9 persons or entity.

10 And I'm sorry I took so long but my time is  
11 --

12 MR. SCISSURA: Time is up. Thank you.

13 MS. BROWN: Good evening, and thank you for  
14 this opportunity. Sevonna Brown and I'm the  
15 assistant executive director of Black Women's  
16 Blueprint. I'm also on the steering committee of  
17 NYC4CEDAW.

18 Black Women's Blueprint supports using and  
19 adding to each of the subject areas a gender  
20 analysis based on CEDAW, the Convention on the  
21 Elimination of Discrimination Against Women which  
22 you've heard about tonight.

23 Black Women's Blueprint knows that we are a  
24 city not only in need of the strong equity  
25 revision that are robust, coherent and grounded

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1 in critical analysis but also of  
2 intersectionality which tend to the multitude of  
3 identities that makeup who we are and how we move  
4 through the world.

5 The 16 core articles provide a replicable  
6 yet consistent temporary plate of indicators  
7 through which city agency can activate the  
8 proposed action plans and analyze and report on  
9 racial and gender equity with ease using a human  
10 rights framework. We are counting down the days  
11 until hour expires which is not likely to be  
12 reauthorize at the end of September.

13 With the recent federal administration  
14 threats to make vital cuts to anti-rap,  
15 anti-battery and anti-stocking services through  
16 the violence against women act we are running out  
17 of place to turn to for safety and justice. New  
18 York City must be on the front lines of  
19 protecting the rights of the most marginalized  
20 residents and that is women and girls in our  
21 communities who are under siege. We need policy  
22 makers to listen to them and we need to institute  
23 mechanisms for public involvement and oversight  
24 over any and all gender and racial equity  
25 efforts.

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1           A component of our efforts is a goal of  
2           ensuring not only access to equal opportunity but  
3           also equal outcomes that reflect human rights  
4           understandings of nondiscrimination and equality.  
5           Intersectionality is also imbedded in CEDAW.  
6           This means that gender barriers are seen in the  
7           context with all overlapping forms of  
8           discrimination including on the basis of race and  
9           social economic status, level of ability not as  
10          isolated issues. We expect a gender analysis to  
11          happen across every single city department. This  
12          means we'll know what our officials are doing in  
13          terms of women's rights and we also expect an  
14          oversight body focus on gender analysis and an  
15          agent equity issues. The city should earmark  
16          \$0.25 for every women and girl who resides in the  
17          city to go toward ending gender-based violence  
18          and ensuring economic justice through quality  
19          jobs.

20                 We seek to ensure the following areas across  
21                 the board for all women and girls in New York  
22                 City. A human rights initiative on behalf of  
23                 women that women require the full realization of  
24                 all of their rights within New York City and that  
25                 they are supported in the aftermath of violence

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1 through outcome based projects that increase  
2 their civic engagement base building and voter  
3 empowerment especially.

4 Thank you so much.

5 MR. SCISSURA: Thank you very much. Are  
6 there any questions?

7 (No response.)

8 MR. SCISSURA: Nope? Okay. Thank you.

9 Our final panel will be Laura Del  
10 Prete-Conde, Jeanine Materna and Frank Morano.

11 Frank, I was getting worried that I haven't  
12 seen you yet during this process.

13 MR. MORANO: I'll make up for any --

14 MR. SCISSURA: Thank you I'm sure you will.

15 Okay. Laurie, you are up.

16 MS. DEL PRETE-CONDE: Good evening. My name  
17 is Laura Del Prete-Conde. I am the program  
18 director for the Staten Island COAD which stands  
19 for Community Organizations Active in Disaster.

20 The support of community based coalitions  
21 and community involved disaster planning is  
22 essential and needs to be included in the 2018  
23 Charter Revision Commission. We unfortunately  
24 have disaster amnesia and people only remember  
25 the most recent disasters if they get the litany

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1 of disasters that has been left behind in our  
2 history.

3 Luckily, the Staten Island COAD has been  
4 doing very large work with a very small agency.  
5 Funding of borough coalitions will ensure a  
6 better prepared community. A community that  
7 responds and recovers faster and in turn saves  
8 the city money. For every dollar in preparedness  
9 we save \$7 in recovery.

10 The Staten Island COAD is one of the highest  
11 functioning coalitions in New York and becoming  
12 an official part of the Charter allows us  
13 recognition by city agency and assist us with  
14 moving forward in our preparation work.

15 The Staten Island COAD has trained hundreds  
16 of New Yorkers in Stop the Bleed active shooter  
17 training awareness, community preparation and  
18 even how to use a fire extinguisher. Though  
19 based in Staten Island our reach is why. When  
20 disaster curse, be it man made or natural, the  
21 community connections that the Staten Island COAD  
22 has with local non-profits city, state and  
23 federal officials will help communities be safe,  
24 be ready and be able to recover. Even though  
25 disaster -- I'm sorry, every disaster starts and

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1 ends on a local but those doing the local work  
2 need support. Please consider the importance of  
3 support of community coalitions such as the  
4 Staten Island COAD. Thank you.

5 MR. SCISSURA: Thank you.

6 Jeanine Materna.

7 MS. MATERNA: Great. Thank you so much for  
8 this opportunity. Thank you for being here today  
9 this evening.

10 My name is Jeanine Materna. I'm president  
11 of the Pleasant Plains Princess Bay Richmond  
12 Valley Civic Association and recent graduate of  
13 New York Law School and a very politically active  
14 individual here in Staten Island.

15 Despite all the passion, the hype that often  
16 accompany local and state elections, many New  
17 Yorkers still do not vote and voter participation  
18 in New York State has declined dramatically over  
19 the past half century and now stands near bottom  
20 as compared to other states. For example, in  
21 2016 New York ranked 41st in the nation in voter  
22 turnout. The majority of states 37 plus  
23 additional in Columbia now allow early voting.

24 New York's election law does not provide for  
25 early voting and tonight I'd like to advocate for

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1 my support for election reform as a way to  
2 increase voter participation. Currently, some  
3 three-dozen states permit it and New York's  
4 election law are silent on this issue. Early  
5 voting in so many states has proven to invigorate  
6 campaigns and increase voter turn out. This  
7 reform has the added benefit of facilitating  
8 voting on election day by reducing waiting time  
9 and generally improving voting procedures in the  
10 polling plates.

11 The people that this would most help are the  
12 families. The families who are working with  
13 children and school. Those who work during the  
14 day. Those who work during the night who have  
15 shift hours and with sports activities and  
16 homework they all intend to vote but just don't  
17 have the opportunity and things come up that day  
18 and they just don't make it happen.

19 So I'd like to encourage the Commission to  
20 please consider revising the Charter to include  
21 early voting so that more people in our community  
22 will have an active voice in our community.

23 Thank you so much.

24 MR. SCISSURA: Thank you very much.

25 Frank, you get to close us off.

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1 MR. MORANO: Oh, terrific.

2 Thank you, Commissioners. It's good to see  
3 you again. I want to thank you for coming to  
4 Staten Island and thank you for your service  
5 throughout this whole process.

6 People may not have a full appreciation of  
7 the work that you put in but I know it's a lot of  
8 work takes a lot of time and you're expected to  
9 go to every corner of the city to listen  
10 patiently as person after person criticizes  
11 everything that you're not doing. So we do  
12 recognize many of us that it is a great sacrifice  
13 in terms of time and energy.

14 Let me on that note though criticize you for  
15 a few things that you're not doing: I think  
16 there is a number of great suggestions related to  
17 electoral reform and I certainly agree with what  
18 everybody said today about instant runoff voting  
19 and ranked choice voting and the report the staff  
20 has produced is terrific. And I understand that  
21 to find that amount of time and you're trying to  
22 get questions on the ballot for this November and  
23 you can't put everything -- that you can't hold  
24 hearings on everything that everyone suggests.

25 That being said I'm very disappointed that

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1 there was not a single public meeting dedicated  
2 to studying the issue of proportional  
3 representation. As I indicated, the 12 years --  
4 you can clap. The 12 years that New York City  
5 had proportional representation to elected city  
6 legislator was the most politically diverse in  
7 our city's history. And to not only not hold a  
8 hearing on it but omit it completely from the  
9 report as if no one suggested it. It reinforces  
10 a lot of negative stereo types that people may  
11 have about the Commission, that it may have a  
12 predetermined outcome or that it's perpetuating  
13 the status quo.

14 That being said, there's two minor subjects  
15 that I don't believe would require a great deal  
16 of study that you could still get on the ballot  
17 this November. The first has to do with the  
18 easing ballot access requirements. The 2010  
19 Commission, which Commissioners Scissura served  
20 on, one of the great things they did was amend  
21 Section 47 of the City Charter to cut in half the  
22 number of raw signatures to run for every office  
23 in New York City. But they cut in half the raw  
24 number. So it was great for Republicans, great  
25 for democrats, great for independent candidates

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1 but for minor parties it still maintains that  
2 five percent threshold of signature requirements.  
3 So that means if you're running for office in the  
4 city as a republican or democrat you need to get  
5 about, in most districts, .05 percent of the  
6 people in that district to sign your petition.  
7 If you're running as an independent you just have  
8 to get 450 signatures from any New Yorker of any  
9 party but there's still that five percent  
10 requirement for members of minor parties.

11 As a member of a minor party myself, I can  
12 tell you how difficult that is. Those of you  
13 that have run for office before know the  
14 difficulty of collecting minor party signatures.  
15 So I would encourage you add to Section 47 of the  
16 City Charter and build on the work that the 2010  
17 Commission did and cut that five percent  
18 requirement in half to two and a half percent.

19 And lastly, I would just encourage you put  
20 in the City Charter that this process should be  
21 permanent. Let's have every mayor, every  
22 speaker, every public advocate, every borough  
23 president have the ability to appoint a Charter  
24 Revision Commission that would meet in perpetuity  
25 for two years to perpetually make recommendations

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1 to the public to the mayor and to the City  
2 Council.

3 Every Charter Commission I've testified at  
4 every one since 2002. Every single member of the  
5 Commission that I've known in that time has said  
6 I wish we had more time, I wish we had more time.  
7 Give --

8 MR. SCISSURA: Your time is up. Your time  
9 is up on that note.

10 I will say this about Mr. Morano. He's been  
11 an advocate both -- on the last Commission, not  
12 this Commission.

13 But a couple of questions -- actually, I'm  
14 going to let Dr. Clarke go and then I'll come  
15 back.

16 DR. CLARKE: I wanted to ask a little bit  
17 more about early voting.

18 How early is early voting in your mind?

19 MS. MATERNA: I would say between 12 and  
20 14 days.

21 DR. CLARKE: Say that again?

22 MS. MATERNA: Excuse me?

23 DR. CLARKE: How --

24 MS. MATERNA: Between 12 to 14 days early  
25 voting before the actual election.

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1 MR. SCISSURA: So I have two questions.  
2 Proportional voting, I believe, I'm not going to  
3 say it by a hundred percent but I believe you're  
4 one of the first or second maybe people to bring  
5 it up during these hearings.

6 But just for clarity, what exactly do you  
7 mean by that?

8 MR. MORANO: So in New York City in the  
9 1930s the legislature was the board of aldermen  
10 and it was as corrupt as the day is long,  
11 controlled by Tammany Hall. And not just corrupt  
12 but ineffective.

13 So mayor LaGuardia and the reform movement  
14 that became popular in the 30s said, you know,  
15 let's do something different. So they chose to  
16 have a new city council to replace the board of  
17 alderman and have proportional representation,  
18 which a lot of other countries do. And basically  
19 what it means is that you would get votes in  
20 proportion -- you would get representation in  
21 proportion to the number of votes you get.

22 For instance, here in New York City in the  
23 last round of municipal council elections  
24 20 percent of New Yorkers voted to be represent  
25 by Republicans yet they were only about

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1 six percent of Republicans in the New York City  
2 Council. So we have a legislature that's not  
3 truly representative of the way the people are  
4 voting.

5 So to allow proportional representation it  
6 gives a fair opportunity for minor parties, both  
7 Republicans and working families, independents,  
8 conservatives reform and so forth. And it allows  
9 people that may have different issues that they  
10 want to bring out, be it NYCHA reform or  
11 education reform or healthcare reform to run a  
12 slate and get votes and legislation in proportion  
13 to that.

14 Israel does this, Italy does this, New York  
15 City used to do it even up until we elected the  
16 New York City school boards, the community school  
17 boards. So there's no reason that we shouldn't  
18 at least have a hearing on it to hear from  
19 experts about the benefits.

20 And we -- they did away with it because two  
21 communists were elected in the midst of the red  
22 scare but those communists were elected so the  
23 solution was to basically go back to clubhouse  
24 control politics. And unfortunately The Times  
25 these days, if you read the papers, are way too

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1 similar to the Tammany Hall era for my tastes.

2 MR. SCISSURA: And then my second has to do  
3 with your Charter review proposal. Are you  
4 saying that we should say in the Charter that the  
5 mayor must --

6 MR. MORANO: So what if you put a question  
7 on the ballot this year: Should at the  
8 conclusion every election the mayor, the speaker,  
9 the public advocate, comptroller, the borough  
10 presidents be able to appoint a Charter review  
11 Commission a Charter Revision Commission to hear  
12 input from the public make recommendation to the  
13 legislature and if they should choose to put  
14 questions on the ballot because --

15 MR. SCISSURA: That's already in the Charter  
16 that they can --

17 MR. MORANO: But it's not mandated.

18 MR. SCISSURA: So very simple, you're saying  
19 that we should say that it should be mandated as  
20 opposed to they may do it?

21 MR. MORANO: Yes.

22 MR. SCISSURA: Perfect.

23 Yes, ma'am.

24 MS. WEISER: I guess I have one follow-up  
25 question for you relating to -- okay. I guess

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1 one of the other proposals that has been put  
2 forward to make the redistricting process more  
3 independent, which I'm just wondering if that and  
4 any of those in any way to address some of the  
5 concerns that you would use and do you support  
6 that?

7 MR. MORANO: Certainly. I'd prefer a  
8 nonpartisan independent redistricting Commission  
9 to a partisan non-independent redistricting  
10 Commission. But I think the broader problem is  
11 that political minorities still aren't being  
12 truly represented and I think you know that.

13 If you are dealing with, say, the south  
14 shore of Staten Island where whomever the  
15 Republican candidate is going to win irrespective  
16 of the nature of the redistricting Commission or  
17 the north shore of Staten Island with whomever  
18 the democratic candidate is going to win. You're  
19 really disenfranchising political minorities in  
20 those communities. And while redistricting  
21 making it more independent and doing away with  
22 gerrymandering as much as possible, it doesn't do  
23 anything to increase represented to political  
24 minorities.

25 MS. WEISER: Thank you.

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1 MR. SCISSURA: Great.

2 Any other questions?

3 (No response.)

4 MR. SCISSURA: Thank you very much for being  
5 here.

6 MR. MORANO: So I believe we are concluding  
7 with our public testimony. I want to thank you,  
8 everyone, again for attending this evening.

9 Our next meeting will be on August 14th at  
10 1:00 p.m.

11 Do we have a location for that? No.

12 Location to be determined. And that's where  
13 we will discuss the findings of the report and  
14 take further action.

15 So I thank you all for being here. Have a  
16 wonderful evening.

17 (Whereupon, the above matter concluded.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF NEW YORK )  
 : SS.:  
COUNTY OF BRONX )

I, CECILIA NAVARRO, 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.

I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or by marriage and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 1st day of August 2018.

\_\_\_\_\_  
CECILIA NAVARRO

