

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION

AND

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

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JULY 1, 2026

Start: 10:41 a.m.

Recess: 12:55 p.m.

HELD AT: COMMITTEE ROOM - CITY HALL

B E F O R E: Chair Justin Sanchez

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Sandra Ung
Virginia Maloney
Susan Zhuang
Farah Louis
David Carr
Inna Vernikov

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

Gregory Anderson - Commissioner of the New
York City Department of Sanitation.

Jen McDonnell - Deputy Commissioner for
Solid Waste Management

Frank Marshall - Assistant Commissioner
for the Bureau of Commercial Waste.

Josh Herath - Marcus Vice President for
New York City at Action Environmental
Services

Joyce Bialik - Member of the Manhattan
Solid Waste Advisory Board and We Act for
Environmental Justice

Justin Wood - Director of Policy at New
York Lawyers for the Public Interest

Eric Goldstein - Natural Resources Defense

Jamir Rush - Cafeteria Culture

Rhonda Kaiser - Program & Policy Director

Mary Ellen Sullivan

Matthew Civello - Chair, Manhattan Solid
Waste Advisory Board

Wendy Frank - Manhattan Solid Waste
Advisory Board

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

Domingo Morales - Compost Power

Justin Green - Executive director - Big
Reuse

Erin Wright - Representing Brooklyn
Borough President Antonio Reynoso

Via Zoom:

Lou Dubuque, Vice President for the
Northeast Region for the National Waste
and Recycling Association

CLERK: This is a microphone check on the Committee of Sanitation and Solid Waste Management, recorded by James Marino, in the committee room, on July 1st, 2026.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good morning and welcome to today's New York City hearing on Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management. At this time during today's hearing, no one may approach the dais. Please silence any electronic devices that you may have. Chair, you may begin.

CHAIR SANCHEZ: Good morning. And welcome to the Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management. I am Justin Sanchez, Council Member and Chair of this Committee. Thank you all for joining us today. And truly, truly, truly apologize for, uh, the delay, um, in this morning's proceedings. Um, that is not the way that we like to operate on this committee. Uh, so really apologize. And thank you for- everyone for being here on time. Um, it is truly appreciated. Um, and also working with us to change the committee to an earlier time, because the entire plan was to get everyone out earlier, um, if I

hadn't been so late. Uh, so, uh, thank you everyone. Um, and I'd also like to acknowledge the council members who are, uh, with us here today, uh, Council Member Louis, Council Member Zhuang, uh, Council Member Carr— uh, Minority Leader Carr— uh, and Council Member Chanel Thomas-Henry. Um, and, uh, I know that Council Member, uh, Virginia Junior Maloney was also here and will be returning to join us, uh, shortly. So the purpose of today's hearing is to hear six bills, five of which are sponsored by Council Member Sandy Nurse. Intro 70— number 75 would amend the Department of Sanitation's enforcement routing program to allow for businesses to receive fines for sidewalk cleanliness violations during their hours of operations, or between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Intro number 353 would establish a commercial waste zone working group. Intro number 356 would require DSNY to adopt rules allowing community composters to charge the public for organic waste collection at drop-off sites and allow community composters to sell compost generated from drop-off sites to the public. Intro

number 367 would require DSNY to accept and process commercial solid waste at all city-owned or operated marine and rail transfer stations and to publicly report the amount and type of waste received at such stations on an annual basis. And Intro Number 369 would require DSNY to establish one or more organic waste composting facilities in each borough. We will also be hearing Intro 911A, sponsored by Council Member David Carr, which would require DSNY to enter into agreements with six commercial waste haulers for the borough of Staten I-leen- Staten Island, uh, and delay implementation implementation of the Staten Island Commercial Waste Zone until February 1st, 2028. I will now turn it over to Council Member Carr to provide a statement on his bill.

COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Thank you, Chair.

Uh, I appreciate you having this hearing today. And I really want to commend you on your leadership of the committee throughout the course of this year. Uh, I look forward to continuing to work with you on improving our quality of life across all of our boroughs. And I just want to welcome our, our

friends and, uh- here today. I can promise you my cats, if they were here, would not be as well as he is. Um, Commissioner, always a pleasure to see you. Um, I really appreciate your partnership since you returned to the agency, um and, uh, working on a whole host of issues to improve quality of life for Staten Islanders. And I really want to thank, um, everyone at the Sanitation Department, particularly in the borough operations in Staten Island and Brooklyn, for the phenomenal job they do each and every week. Um, introduction 911-A is introduced, I think, to resolve, uh, a problem that has arisen as a result of the implementation of the commercial waste zones. Uh, in, in my view, when I was a part of, uh, the work of my predecessor, Steve Matteo, uh, he opposed this legislation, because he felt that it was a solution to a problem in some parts of our city, but not one that we were facing in Staten Island, and yet created negative externalities for our borough. Uh, we had a perfectly working, uh, market situation in Staten Island with respect to commercial carting. And there were not the negative consequences that

you're seeing in other places where you had multiple carters serving blocks, different businesses had different contracts, um, and the, you know, the negative results that attended to that, you know, namely, uh, congestion, uh, uh, truck traffic and noise at unfortunate hours, and just repeated visits by different trucks on the same block. That was never something we experienced on Staten Island. And so this is a solution that is great for other parts of the city and not necessarily one that was needed in Staten Island. But we are now limited, um, as Staten Islanders, in who we can choose to contract with. Um, and I'm generally speaking against those kinda' (sic) market interferences, because I think consumers should have a choice, that they should have a choice as to who their carter is. And in particular, I'm concerned about the possibility that longtime Staten Island businesses would then be cut out of a market in which they have been ably serving for a number of years. Uh, additionally, you know, I'm concerned about, uh, one of the other consequences of this legislation, which is that

before a, uh, a CWZ could even be implemented or before, uh, an award could even become operational, you have, uh, companies that are seeking to sell, uh, before they even begin the work of their award. And I think that creates the possibility where, uh, an awardee inflates the value of their company, um, in order to be sold, um, and without ever having, you know, done any of the work. And I think that's something that we have to guard against. We have to protect the department. We have to protect the taxpayer. And we have to protect the consumers in each of the zones. And so that is why I'm putting forward Introduction 911A, because I think we need a pause on the implementation of the CWZ. And I think we also need to make sure that Staten Islanders have as many choices as they can. And I think the unique circumstances that we have in our borough justify doing things differently there than we would do in the other commercial waste zones. And so I urge my colleagues to be supportive of this legislation. And I look forward to hearing testimony from the Department. Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SANCHEZ: Thank you, uh, Minority Leader Carr. Um, I look forward to the dialogue today. And I would like to thank everyone on my team, uh, for their work on this legislation. Uh, we will start by— oh, I also want to recognize Council Member, uh, Vernikov, who has joined us via Zoom, um, and recognize that Council Member, uh, Maloney is now with us in person. Uh, we will, uh, start by hearing testimony from DSNY. Then we will turn it over, uh, to hear testimony from members of the public. Uh, and I will now turn it over to our committee council to administer the oath.

UNIDENTIFIED: Good moh— good morning, Council Meh— or Commissioner Anderson, Assistant Commissioner Marshall, and Director Jen McDonnell. Do you affirm— may you please raise your right hands? Thank you. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, when testifying and responding to Council Member questions today?

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: I do.

UNIDENTIFIED: Thank you. You may begin.

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: Great. Uh, good morning, Chair Sanchez and members of the Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management. I'm Gregory Anderson, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Sanitation, and I'm joined by Jen McDonnell, Deputy Commissioner for Solid Waste Management, and Frank Marshall, Assistant Commissioner for the Bureau of Commercial Waste. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in front of this committee today. Uh, before I get into my prepared testimony, I just want to provide a few updates. There's a lot of exciting things happening in sanitation. Uh, first, happy fiscal new year to everyone. Uh, we were very excited to see yesterday that the City Council passed, uh, Intro 31, which would allow sanitation to expand the commercial organics program to all food-related businesses. Uh, and we look forward to implementing that over the course of the next few months ahead of the December 1st, uh, deadline in the bill. Uh, and second, we are very excited that the council passed Intro, uh, 92, uh, sponsored by our dear friend Council Member

Gail Brewer, uh, to allow us to use, uh, stickers to, uh, alert the public of violators of alternate side parking. Uh, so we look forward to rolling that out in the coming months as well. Uh, as it is joo- uh, July 1st, we have exciting news around containerization. First, uh, today is the first day of signups and registration for Brooklyn Community District 2. So all businesses with 10 or more units in Brooklyn Community District 2, uh, will be able to sign up to receive their Empire bins. They're mandatory for buildings 31-plus units. And they are optional for buildings with 10 to 30 units. They can choose either the Empire bins or, uh, wheelie bins, whichever they prefer. They just have to let us know which they prefer. Uh, so we will start doing outreach today. We have teams out on the ground. Uh, and I'm heading over there, uh, shortly after this hearing, uh, to film a quick little video. Uh, secondly, on containerization, very excited to announce that we have published our draft environmental impact statement for the containerization program. Uh, this is something that

the department has worked on tirelessly for the last year-plus. It's, it's the result of an incredible amount of analysis, uh, public engagement. And we really want to thank our team who has worked on this, as well as our partner agencies at DOT, DEP, Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination, and others, who have been part of this process. And we will have a hearing on the final scope of work in the DEIS coming up in July. And lastly, it is July 1st, as I mentioned, uh, which means that Starting today, customers in the Midtown South and Staten Island commercial waste zones can sign up with one of their three, uh, selected carters. And that sign-up period continues through August 31st. So we are also having outreach staff out there, uh, today. It'll be limited for the next couple days because of the heat wave. But starting next week, we will be out there in full force. So turning to the in- the bills we have, uh, in front of us today. First, Intro 75, sponsored by Council Member Nurse, would allow Sanitation to conduct, uh, cleanliness enforcement for commercial premises during all posted business

hours, uh, or from 8:00 to seven-ay- uh, 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., uh, for businesses that don't have posted hours. We strongly support this legislation, uh, which we think will improve the cleanliness of our commercial corridors. Uh, this addresses a long standing, uh, issue that, uh, currently restricts our enforcement of dirty sidewalks to just two one-hour periods per day. Um, and for commercial properties, this limitation can prevent us from performing effective enforcement for some of the worst actors, uh, those individual businesses that can mar the appearance of an entire commercial corridor. This legislation would fix this historic wrong, uh, and allow for common sense and consistent enforcement during a businesses posted operating hours. Our goal, to be clear, is never enforcement for enforcement's sake, nor is it for the sake of revenue for that matter as well. Our goal is and always will be to achieve compliance and cleanliness, particularly among repeat offenders. And we thank the Council for their action in the last, uh, few years to try to give us more tools in this area. Um,

our biz- our outreach and business engagement staff work closely with our partner agencies, like SBS, our business improvement districts, chambers of commerce, and other stakeholders, to ensure that education remains our first tool to achieve that compliance, and to give New York City businesses the information tools they need to comply with long standing sanitation laws. All property owners have a responsibility to keep their sidewalks and their properties clean. And DSNY is grateful to Council Member Nurse and Chair Sanchez for their leadership in advancing this important bill. Intro 353, sponsored by Council Member Nurse, would require the creation of commercial waste zones working group. There's a lot of words here in my testimony on this. I'll just, uh, skip to the end, which is, um, we certainly welcome the opportunity to conduct additional, uh, engagement through a formalized working group and plan to advance a formalized working group, uh, whether or not this bill moves. Um, so we'll look forward to working with the Council, uh, to get that done. Uh, for Intro 356,

again, sponsored by Council Member Nurse, uh, would require sanitation to adopt rules to permit community partners to charge for the collection of organic waste at drop-off site and to sell compost to the public. Uh, DSNY rules currently do not prohibit this practice. Uh, previous sanitation contracts with certain, uh, community partners did prohibit programs funded by the city from charging for these services. But because those programs are no longer baseline funded in the administration's budget, uh, these restrictions no longer apply. Um, so I think, you know, the, the takeaway here is, uh, we look forward to working with the Council to understand the intent of this legislation. Uh, but we don't think it's, it's necessary at this time. Um, and given that the Council has provided significant funding, uh, on the order of \$5.25 million, uh, in the Schedule C posted yesterday, uh, we do think that publicly funded programs do need to balance access equity, uh, with the financial sustainability of the organizations, uh, that are funded by the Council. Intro 367, sponsored by Council Member Nurse, would

require sanitation to accept commercial waste at our city's transfer stations. Uh, and while we oppose the bill as it is written, uh, we have said previously, uh, and committed conceptually to the acceptance of commercial waste at our transfer stations in both the 2006 final and 2026 draft solid waste management plans. Uh, and the permits for these facilities do allow them to accept commercial waste today. Uh, as we said at the swamp hearing in the beginning of April, we plan to begin this process after we finish the complete, uh, citywide implementation of commercial waste zones by the end of 2027. And we look forward to continuing these conversations as we approach that date, uh, next year. Next, Intro 369 would require Sanitation to establish one or more organic waste composting facilities in each borough with the capacity to process at least 100,000 wet ton— 180,000 wet tons of organic waste annually. And while we appreciate the Council's interest in expanding processing capacity citywide, uh, we do oppose the bill's requirement, uh, for compost facilities in each borough with this

capacity, given the simple regulatory, operational, and fiscal, realities that make— that would make implementation impossible. Uh, so we do— we, we are happy to have further conversations with Council about our efforts to expand composting capacity. But we don't think this bill, uh, would be, uh, implementable. And lastly, uh, Intro 911A, sponsored by Council Member Carr, would increase the number of carters in the Staten Island Commercial Waste Zone from no more than three to a total of six, and delay the implementation of such zone. Uh, deh— Sanitation opposes this bill as it would undermine the Commercial Waste Zone program, its core benefits of decreased truck traffic, improved safety, and strengthened consumer protections. Uh, and we cannot support the disruption to this system in the midst of implementation, particularly as I mentioned previously, with the Staten Island zone implementation starting this morning. Uh, nor do we support depriving Staten Island residents and businesses from the clear benefits this program provides, which we've seen in the six zones that are

already implemented. Uh, so thank you for the opportunity to testify today. And I am now happy to answer your questions.

CHAIR SANCHEZ: Uh, I will turn it over first to, uh, Minority Leader Carr, uh, to, uh, ask about, uh, Intro 911.

MINORITY LEADER CARR: Thank you. Thank you, Chair. And Commissioner, you mentioned containerization earlier. I just want to thank you again for extending both the funding and the grace period for, uh, individual compliance, um, and, and righting a wrong of the previous administration, and making sure folks have time to actually get the bins. So thank you again for that. I know you worked closely with the Chair and Council Member Moreno on getting that done. Um, with respect to intrano-Intro 911A, I think one of the things that I've been concerned about is that there's no real attendant benefit for Staten Island, because it's- again, as I said in my statement, you're not resolving a problem that we had; it was a problem that existed in other boroughs. And more importantly, I, I dispute the

notion that whatever benefits that do come with the program are being disrupted by this legislation, because I'm not actually seeking to change the standards by which additional awardees would be selected. So could you kinda' describe what your concerns are, uh, from your perspective with, with what we're proposing here today?

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: Yeah. So I-I, I would dispute the notion that there's no benefit to Staten Island from commercial waste zones. I think the benefits are, are many. Um, and while the, the truck traffic concern may not have been as great on Staten Island as it was in other places, I think the, the- there are very real, uh, concerns around safety for both workers and the public. There are very real concerns around the lack of compliance ih- with commercial recycling, uh, uh, requirements, and commercial organics requirements. Uh, and, you know, I think very, very serious concerns around the, the kind of services that, uh, haulers that had been operating, uh, on Staten Island and across the five boroughs, uh, in, in the prior system. And so

commercial waste zones brings (sic) a number of benefits, not just reducing, uh, the total truck traffic, but that is certainly a significant one. Uh, and, you know, the, the program parameters at large, I think bring a number of benefits to Staten Islanders.

MINORITY LEADER CARR: But if the-- if there were new awardees, they would have to comply with the requirements of the program, they would have-- if they were an existing hauler already operating, they would now have to comply with the standards that need to be met for any commercial waste zone awardee. So I'm struggling to understand how bringing additional, uh, folks into the system for consumers to choose would, adreh-- would, you know, would denude a lot of the, the, the additional requirements that they would have to meet. They would have to meet the same standards as any other awardee. So I, I don't think that there's really a diminishment in the benefits of the CWZ. If anything, you're just bringing more folks into compliance who may not have been before. And yet they continue to operate, consumers continue to

have more choices. Uh, I, I think that there's— I think there's no trade-off here between the goals of the authors of the CWZ program and what I'm trying to do here.

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: Yeah, I think the, the challenge is that we have been working to implement this for seven years now, and, uh, you know, this bill is getting a hearing on the day that the Staten Island Zone is being implemented, the full two years-plus after the— these contracts were awarded, a full six years after the RFP was released. Um, and yeah, I think just to be frank, it's, it is a slippery slope once you start to make exceptions for, uh, certain parts of the city or certain carters. Uh, in a program like this, I think our concern would be that, that, you know, others would stand up and say, well, what about me, what about me? And, you know, the commercial waste zone system was designed very, very, um, deliberately and carefully by the Council and the Sanitation Department over the course of many, many years, uh, in order to build a system that works that, operate (sic), that, that gives

businesses choice. There are many places across the country, particularly in, you know, in the South, in Florida, in Texas, um, in Los Angeles, where businesses only get one choice for their hauler. We specifically said that's not acceptable. We want to give businesses choice. And today, businesses on Staten Island can ch-chhooose any of those three carters that they want to provide their waste collection services. And 79 percent of businesses on Staten Island already use one of those three carters. So it's really only 21 percent of businesses on Staten Island that have to pick a new carter. We are confident that the three carters that, uh, are out there today are, uh, able to provide very high-quality, very low-cost, services for Staten Island businesses.

MINORITY LEADER CARR: Well, a fifth is a pretty substantial number of folks. I admit it's not a majority, but it- I think that's a large number of folks who are now looking for a new carter when they didn't feel the need to choose one. Right? And I think that, you know, it's about whether or not I,

or the Department, or anyone in government, wants to substitute our judgment for who the best carting service for a customer is. Right? And I think that the, um, the, the concerns that I have is that it's going to, uh, end up harming businesses. And I think- and I understand there are price controls. But I think ultimately at the end of the day that we're taking away these choices from consumers, and we're boxing out local businesses that have been serving these communities for some time. And I think that that's why we're at this point, because we're on the precipice of implementation, as you say. But there's still two months, as you say, for folks to choose one of the new three carters. So I don't think that there's no time to turn things around and kinda' take a pause and have a conversation about how we can minimize the negative consequences, unintended I think, for a borough that I think you would admit is unique among the other four. And I think that there's a- there's reasons for us to treat our borough differently. Um, and I think that's one of the things we've been pushing for as a united

delegation, is to say, Staten Island is different, each borough is different, and there's a way for us to justify rationally a different treatment for different places that avoids the what about me problem that you're describing.

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: I just, I just think, you know, the fact that this bill is being heard on the day that implementation is starting, I think indicates that it's- you know, that we have already invested a tremendous amount of effort and thought. The Carters have invested a tremendous amount of their time and money into preparing for these- for this program. And, you know, I think if, if that were something that Staten Islanders strongly felt two years ago, five years ago, seven years ago, when this bill was, was passed by the City Council, that would have been the appropriate time for that conversation.

CHAIR SANCHEZ: One of the- uh, thank you, Member- uh, Minority little- Minority Leader Carr, for your questions. Um, one of the concerns that I have, um, uh, separated and aside from the, uh,

Staten Island issue is, uh, I know that Staten Island had, um, a charter that was changed to- uh, was bought out by another Carter. Um, and can you explain the process of how, um, they automatically were- ee- yes, they did buy out, uh, that third carter that had been the awardee. Uh, but for the future, one of the concerns that I have is, does that set a precedent that if you buy out any of the other carters, you automatically have a contract with the city? Uh, could you just explain a little bit more on how, um, that process came to be, and for the future, um, what that process will look like for other times? Um, I know we were in a bit of a situation as we were trying to get the CWZ online for today. Uh, but just understanding, um, what that process can look like for the future, and if there are any adjustments or amendments that can be made, so that it doesn't look like all you have to do is buy somebody out and then you get a city contract.

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: Yeah, so, uh, we've actually seen a, a, a large amount of, uh, merger and acquisition activity in the commercial waste

industry, uh, since, uh, since Local Law 199, uh, passed in 2019, uh, and then also, since the awards were, uh, were done in 2024. Uh, for example, the first zone that was implemented, the Queens Central Zone, uh, one of the awardees, uh, was purchased by another company. Uh, Royal was purchased by Waste Connections. Uh, th-that award was then transferred to the other awardee. There's a, um, a due diligence and review process that Frank and his staff conduct, to ensure that the, uh, the purchasing company has the, you know, financial wherewithal to, to provide the service that we require, uh, that they are able to meet all of the standards, uh, and contractual requirements. Uh, and most importantly, the pricing does not change. Uh, so if, if one company merges with another or acquires another, uh, the pricing that was in that initial RFP stands as the pricing, uh, that they're required to honor. And so, uh, you know, it's not suh- it's not simply you're buying the award, but you are, um, you know, purchasing the company and agreeing to meet all of the same requirements that that, uh, predecessor company, uh,

had committed to. And that's common across New York City contracts. We have, uh, situations where— and this has happened, for example, with our recycling vendor— it's gone through— uh, in the time that I've worked at Sanitation for the last, uh, 12 years or so, has gone through three different names, three different corporate ownership structures. That kind of thing happens, uh, in the corporate world. And that kind of thing happens in the, the entities that, uh, we as the city do business with quite regularly.

CHAIR SANCHEZ: Uh, is there a world— or would it complicate more things? I think one of the frustrations that the Staten Island businesses are feeling is, um, for that third RFP. Um, folks are feeling, like, well, once that company is gone, why didn't we get a chance to then all bid for it again. because there are six different carters that already exist on Staten Island, why couldn't I throw my hat in the ring to try and get that now that this person is not doing it? Um, would you be open to amending the process of, uh, the, uh— ih—if a carter cannot fulfill its promises, that we open up the RFP process

committed directly to the agreed-upon, uh, contract already, just folks get to bid if they want that contract, or would that add a crazy level- layer to the process?

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: Yeah, I, I don't know that, that we would necessarily be able to, uh, to implement rules like that. I think that the kinds of merger and acquisition activity that we've seen in the industry, um, are actually a net-positive for the industry because we are seeing that, uh, well-capitalized companies that are able to invest in new technology, able to invest in cleaner trucks, able to invest in, uh, really advanced worker safety training, are making investments by purchasing other companies. And I think that's exactly the, the kind of thing that we want to see in the industry for it to grow, and develop, and become more sophisticated, uh, compared to the industry of, of the old days, uh, particularly when we started to, to study the, um, the industry. There are places where, uh, uh, if two, if two companies that are already given awards in a zone merge together, and there's no other

eligible carters that responded to the RFP, where there may be an open slot. And in that case, we will bid out that open slot. We are doing that right now, uh, in two zones. Um, and I think RFP responses came back a few weeks ago. We're in the process of evaluating those. And we'll have new awards in the future. Um, Local Law 199 gives the Department pretty broad discretion on, on how, uh, to how to decide when and where to fill, uh, zones. We can either assign the zone contract to an existing carter, we can do a new RFP, we can go back to the list of carters that previously had bid on the zone. Um, and I think if you look at the, the or, original RFP for the Staten Island zone, we had five carters bid on that zone. Uh, one of the five carters, who's sitting in the back row of this room, uh, already had 15 zones. So they weren't eligible under the, the language of the law. The other four carters, one of them was Priority, the other one was Century. Century bought Priority. So they would have been the next in line to get the zone anyway. So I think any way you want to sort of, uh, slice it, you know, I

think we, we followed the appropriate procedure here. And, uh, we are confident that Staten Island businesses will get the service they deserve.

CHAIR SANCHEZ: Thank you. Uh, I'd like to, uh, recognize that we've also been joined by Council Member Ung. Uh, and I would like to turn it over to, uh, Council Member Malo, Maloney for questions.

COUNCIL MEMBER MALONEY: Thank you, Chair. And, uh, thank you for your testimony. I am glad to see Intro 75 and your support. I think enforcement of sanitation, uh, from business hours is a sensible solution. Um, and I wanted to ask about Intro 369, where your, your testimony indicates that there are concerns around expanding capacity citywide. And I wanted to know if you have data on the demand in each borough, um, and a study or inquiry of- into, uh, the demand and whether or not these organic waste composting facilities are needed in each borough.

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: Yeah, so I, I think in, in general, we support the, the Council's intent, uh, to expand composting capacity in New York City and in the surrounding metropolitan area. I

think, uh, you know, composting is a very landed-land-intensive activity. Uh, and, and Council Member Carr, uh, has been out to our Staten Island compost facility, uh, with Jen and I. Uh, and, you know, that facility processes 40,000 wet tons per year. We're talking about a facility that's almost five times that size in each borough. Uh, you know, that's a big facility. You couldn't find that space in Manhattan or really- realistically, in, in most of the other boroughs. Uh, so our, our opposition to the bill is, is specifically around the, the, the size requirement, uh, the fact that we would have to site one in each borough. Uh, so I think we're, we're open to conversations with the Council around where should, where should we go directionally with composting. I think we are very excited to- uh, now that the administration has, uh, transferred some of the Rikers properties to DCAS, we're very excited to work with DCAS to see if we can actually construct a, a sizable, uh composting facility there. So I think there's a lot of potential in this space. Uh, but,

uh, you know, the approach of this bill, I think just was not the right direction.

COUNCIL MEMBER MALONEY: Thank you for clarifying your position.

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: Yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER MALONEY: Let me (sic) go back to the Chair.

CHAIR SANCHEZ: Thank you. Um, Council Member Ung, do you have any questions?

COUNCIL MEMBER UNG: No (sic).

CHAIR SANCHEZ: Oh, great. Second round to, uh, Council Member Carr.

COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Thank you, Chair. Um, Commissioner, thank you for explaining, uh, the approach to the substitution, um, with respect to the, the third awardee in the Staten Island zone. I, I think, I think one of my concerns is, is not that the Department did anything inconsistent with the law. My, my problem is the way the law is structured. Right? And I think that the— uh, what you described, right, I think kinda' still leaves me with concerns. Because I think a new RFP would have

been the most appropriate thing, because once you've done an RFP, and now it actually incentivizes those who may think they're in the queue, to be substituted in for a carter, if they're able to do a buy-out, the structure of the law is now creating conversations that wouldn't have happened otherwise. Um, and I think that when you have a, an acquisition that comes in the middle of an award period, I think that's a very different thing to assess than what we were looking at where, uh, this conversation was happening in advance of the award coming into effect. Um, and so I still think that there should be a, a protocol that requires the department, uh, in advance of the implementation of a zone, or moving forward in advance of a new award whenever that day comes, um, for there to be a new RFP, if there's going to be a potential sale, uh, or an awardee isn't, isn't going to be, you know, activating their award and, and, and serving. I think— and that gives an opportunity for the Department to refresh, uh, the list of people who are potentially available or companies that are

potentially available, um, to, to execute that award if they get selected.

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: I, I appreciate the, the point you're making. But, you know, I think that we, we followed the, the letter of Local Law 199 in this process. And, uh, I just, I think fundamentally disagree, uh, with that kind of approach. I think, you know, acquisition happens in these kinds of industries. Um, and, you know, I think it's not something for us to necessarily shy away from.

COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: So you said the local law gives the agency broad discretion. Do you believe it gives you the discretion to choose to do a new RFP in these circumstances if you wanted, or if you dee-deemed it appropriate?

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: Uh, where we've had open, uh, open awards, we've done new F- RFPs in other areas. So yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: So in the case of a potential acquisition, you, you could do another RFP without any amendment to the local law?

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: Particularly if, if we, if we denied the contract assignment, or if the, um, if the selected awardee were to pull out of the zone for some reason- uh, the situation here was, was one carter was, was prepared to start offering the service with the other carter as a, as a designated carter, which is also allowed for under the law. Um, and the, the acquisition simply inverted those two parties. Uh, and the, the carter that was going to be the subcontractor became the prime. So it's, it's... from, from our perspective, it was not a, a tremendous change.

COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: But if BIC approves the purchase, do you still-

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: They have.

COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: -retain discretion- no, I know they did- but do they- do you still retain discretion as a department not to allow the award to transfer, or is, is it your view that once BIC approves the acquisition-

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: We, we retain discretion for sure. But the discretion is, is

subject to, uh, to some, some parameters around, um, you know, the- around having a rational basis for whatever the direction we go.

COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Yeah. I think, I think the way the law is structured, it's not leaving you with sufficient options. Because I think that the- this is just creating some bad incentives, uh, on the, on the industry side, uh, for folks who, you know, made a bid, they didn't get in, um, and they see an opportunity to get in, because they know that they can game it out that they're likely- much like in the situation you described. One of the carters wasn't eligible because they had already gotten enough zones under the law, and they see an opportunity to move up. And I think we have to seek to address that moving forward.

COUNCIL MEMBER CARR: Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR SANCHEZ: Thank you. Uh, so I want to talk briefly about Inter-369. Uh, on average, what is the distance that organic waste must travel from, uh, New York City residents before it is anaerobically digested? Um, and can you describe

each of the waste transfers involved in the— in this travel?

COMMISSIONER ANDREWS: Uh, sure. I'll, I'll, uh, start off and then hand it over to Deputy Commissioner McDonnell to, to talk about all of the specific facilities that we use. But, uh, in general, waste doesn't actually travel that far, uh, to be, uh, either composted or, uh, processed through anaerobic digestion. Uh, we have a number of facilities in New York City that receive that material. We have facilities in New Jersey that receive that material. Uh, and then they are, uh, transferring— transferring it on to, uh, generally either the Newtown Creek wastewater treatment plant or a wastewater treatment plant, uh, that codigests the material in New Jersey. Um, so Jen can speak to the specifics of that.

DIRECTOR MCDONNELL: Yes. Thank you, Commissioner and, uh, Chair Sanchez. The Department issued a procurement in 2023, uh, to secure additional capacity for the receipt, processing, and beneficial use, of all the organics collected by

DSMY, and also those generated by agencies and institutions that we collaborate with, such as, uh, the schools and parks. So as a result of that procurement, we awarded eight contracts. Uh, seven of those contracts have been activated. And they are associated with a variety of transfer stations located, uh, throughout the city. So that does minimize the travel distance. Once the trucks collect the organic material, it goes to a transfer station. One of those, uh- it's actually eight locations. Seven of them are transfer stations, and one is the Staten Island Compost Facility that we've spoken about today. So they- we have direct deliveries of collected material from, uh, Staten Island and South Brooklyn that go to that facility. Uh, so overall, citywide, we have a robust network of locations that minimizes, uh, the distance that trucks have to travel after collecting organics. Once the material is received at the transfer stations, it is sometimes separated by subtype. So for example, we have a very convenient and efficient program, whereby we collect food waste and yard waste

together at the curb. So at some of the transfer stations, they separate the material into piles of yard waste and food waste so that they can process them differentially. Sometimes the woody yard waste will go to composting, and the organics- the wetter, heavier food waste, to co-digestion. So it really depends on the transfer station, and then from there it will go to compost facilities and/or digesters for the beneficial use processing part of the, uh, resource recovery pathway.

CHAIR SANCHEZ: Awesome. Thank you for that. Um, and speaking about transfer stations, um, we're gonna' (sic) turn over to Intro 367. Um, has the Department received requests from carters to use, uh, the Department's marine transfer stations or rail transfer stations? If so, which carters have made this request, um, and which facilities were they interested in?

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: We haven't received, uh, requests. But we did- when we did the RFP part two for the commercial waste zone awards, we did, uh, ask carters to indicate if they would be

interested in using our transfer stations. Uh, some of them did indicate interest, particularly, uh, those that will eventually service the Upper East Side zone. I think there were some of those and some of the other zones in, in Upper Manhattan. Uh, so certainly, uh, once we have completed implementation, we'll reach out to those, uh, carters (sic).

CHIEF SANCHEZ: Uh, and how many city-owned, uh, or operated rail transfer stations are there in New York City?

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: Just one.

CHIEF SANCHEZ: Just one.

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: Staten Island- which is not currently permitted for commercial waste, so we'd have to do-

CHIEF SANCHEZ: Okay.

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: -permit modification.

CHIEF SANCHEZ: Okay. Cool. Uh, and, uh, in terms of Intro 75, uh, can you describe how the Department's enforcement resource needs would change if this bill, uh, were in- to be enacted?

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: Yeah. So I don't think our enforcement, uh, resource needs would change. But we'd be able to use those resources more effectively, uh, in order to conduct that enforcement. And I think one of the examples that, uh, that our team talks about a lot is, you could have, uh, an area— so the, the two one-hour periods are different district by district. Uh, you could have a district where one of the commercial routing hours is 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. But a business may not open— you know, let's say they're, uh, a bar or something like that that doesn't open until noon or later. That means that during that 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. window, we can't even write them a ticket, 'cause (sic) they're not open. So what this would allow us to do is go to that business any time they're open, uh, observe the condition, and then issue a violation. So we'd be able to, to, uh, use our enfo- existing enforcement resources more effectively.

CHIEF SANCHEZ: Okay. No questions from— (chuckles). Um, I want to thank you, uh, all for

your time. Um, and I think we can open it up for the public testimony.

COMMISSIONER ANDERSON: Great. Thank you. Stay cool. And enjoy the July 4th weekend.

CHIEF SANCHEZ: Hot (sic) summer (chuckles). Um, do we have to go check in for zoning? Do we have to check in for zoning? You have to check in for zoning.

(Background conversations)

CHIEF SANCHEZ: Okay. Uh, I now open the hearing for public testimony. I remind all members of the public that this is a government proceeding and that decorum shall be observed at all times. That includes no singing on Zoom.

(Laughter)

CHIEF SANCHEZ: Thank you. (Chuckles). Um, as such, members of the public shall remain silent at all times. The witness table is reserved for people who wish to testify. No video recording or photography is allowed from the witness table. Further, members of the public may not present audio or video recordings as testimony, but may submit

transcripts of such recordings to the sergeant at arms for inclusion in the hearing record. If you wish to speak at today's hearing, please fill out an appearance card with the sergeant at arms and wait to be recognized. When recognized, you will have two minutes to speak on the legislation, on our agenda today. If you have a written statement or additional written testimony you wish to submit for the record, please provide a copy of that testimony to the Sergeant at arms. You may also email written testimony to testimony, at council, dot, NYC, dot, gov, within 72 hours of this hearing. Audio and video recordings will not be accepted. I will now call the first panel. Uh, can I please have, uh, Josh Herath, Justin Wood, also known as Justin Number One, uh, and, uh, Joyce Bialik? You may begin.

JOSH HEREFF: Thank you. Good morning, Chair. My name is Josh Hereff. I serve as the Marcus Vice President for New York City at Action Environmental Services, a subsidiary of Interstate Waste. Thank you for the opportunity to deliver testimony regarding the bills considered during

today's hearing. With respect to Bills 75, 356, 367, and 369, action carting supports reasonable legislation that encourages street cleanliness, expands access to composting, and promotes economically feasible disposal options. Action is poised to support commercial businesses with relevant compliance education in alignment with the progression of these bills. Furthermore, action carting staunchly supports Bill 353, introduced by Council Woman Nurse. The creation of a commercial waste zones working group would be— would structure a healthy dialogue amongst critical stakeholders who are responsible for the successful realization of Local Law 199's key objectives. Awarded carters engage with the DSNY to successfully onboard zones. However, there are limited opportunities to provide or absorb more holistic feedback amongst industry colleagues. This working group would be a productive forum to discuss customers' experiences transitioning to CWZ service agreements, operational best practices, and technologies that prioritize safety and opportunities for efficiency improvements within

an evolving regulatory landscape. In contrast, action carting staunchly opposes the adoption of Bill 911A, which would unnecessarily alter the operating framework and timely implementation of the CWZ program. This bill undermines Local Law 199's intended goals by diluting the required caliber for CWZ awardees and neglecting the DSNY's ability to course-correct underperforming zones. Staten Island's residents and businesses deserve to benefit from reduced truck traffic, vigilant safety standards, and transparency, in the same regard as other boroughs. Therefore, action carting encourages this committee to avoid establishing a harmful precedent by disrupting the program's potential before the zone even launches. Thank you for your time.

CHIEF SANCHEZ: Thank you, Josh.

JOYCE BIALIK: Good morning, Chair.

CHAIR SANCHEZ: Good morning.

JOYCE BIALIK: And dog (sic). My name is Joyce Bialik. And I'm a member of the Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board, as well as We Act for

Environmental Justice. I'm here today to suggest how the city's support of composting can also support one of the values of the mayor's grocery stores, namely making healthy foods accessible to low-income residents. Many of the farms and gardens currently in our city do their own composting and use the compost to grow fruits and vegetables. If clean, wholesome food scraps are used to make clean compost, we get clean, wholesome, nutritious fruits and vegetables. Studies have shown that some of the chemicals found in produce not grown organically are forever chemicals and that small children and pregnant women are particularly vulnerable. Currently, the city's farms and gardens are not distributed evenly across the city, nor are they selling their produce directly to the public or using some of their land to increase compost— to create compost. The city could build a system that maps the current distribution of these farms and community gardens and subsidizes the development of additional growing and composting facilities wherever possible in areas where they are lacking. The city also

should guarantee ongoing support for the compost facilities that currently exist. Priority for the farms, gardens, and compost facilities would be given to low-income neighborhoods. And the city would develop a means for each customer to pay directly to the farm or garden at a rate commensurate to that used in the city grocery stores. The city would monitor the growing and selling to ensure the availability of healthy affordable products that are grown only with contamination-free compost from clean wholesome food scraps. Thank you.

CHIEF SANCHEZ: Thanks so much, Joyce.

JUSTIN WOOD: Good morning, Chair.

CHIEF SANCHEZ: Justin (sic).

JUSTIN WOOD: Uh, thank you so much for holding this hearing. Um, and congratulations to you, and Majority Leader Abreu, and the Council, on the passage of Intro 31 last night. We strongly support that. And of course, on the passage of a, a robust city budget. My name is Justin Wood, Deputy, Director of Policy at New York Lawyers for the Public Interest. And we're a member of Transform and

Don't Trash New York City. As another summer of extreme heat descends on us, as we speak, the federal government continues an assault on renewable energy, climate science, public health, and the very concept of environmental justice. So it's in that context that we offer this strong support for Intros 367 and 369, introduced by Council Member Nurse. Uh, Intro 367, to accept commercial waste at marine and rail facilities owned by the city, is a major and decades-old priority for environmental justice communities that continue to bear the pollution and safety burdens of unjustly sited concentrations of waste transfer stations, uh, based on trucks in outer borough communities. These facilities were designed at their inception to accept commercial waste overnight. The 2006 solid waste management plans environmental impact study explicitly proposed that they be used for this and found there would be minimal impacts on surrounding communities. Um, so we'll submit a more detailed written statement. But we strongly support that and any underlying studies that sanitation needs to conduct to arrive at any

subsidy or, or price that would be necessary to induce commercial haulers to use these facilities. We similarly strongly support Intro 369, uh, requiring the city to operate at least one major aerobic composting facility in each borough, building on the successful expansion of the Fresh Kills facility we heard about today. With the passage of Intro 31 and the long-awaited implementation and enforcement of commercial and residential recycling rules, now is the time to begin planning to process far more organic waste locally and produce rich soil fertilizer for our parks, farms, and gardens. Finally, uh, if I may, we strongly strongly oppose Intro 911-A, which would retroactively delay and undermine implementation of CWZ in Staten Island. Simply put, Staten Islanders— and I happen to be, uh, a resident of the borough— residents, sanitation workers, and businesses, deserve the immediate benefits that started today of the CWZ system that was studied, debated, and legislated, almost a decade ago. Safer streets, cleaner air, recycling, composting, food donation services, and affordable

price structure that ensures Staten Island businesses can save money by diverting more waste from landfills, are all good things. Um, I would just add that if this bill were to pass, we would be concerned that the city would be subject to- almost certainly to, to litigation by the haulers that have already been awarded these zones. And implementation began today. And we would urge the Council not to disrupt the good things that are happening. Our, our partners in organized labor at the Teamsters, for example, have been able to organize substantial numbers of workers in this historically dangerous and exploitative industry. So thank you very much.

CHIEF SANCHEZ: Thanks so much, Justin. Um, and with that, um, this first panel is relieved. Thank you so much. Now, I'd like to bring up Eric Goldstein, Rhonda, uh, Kaiser, and Jamiri Rush. I hope I said that right. You may begin.

ERIC GOLDSTEIN: Good morning, Chair. Thank you for having us at this hearing. Eric Goldstein from the Natural Resources Defense Council. I'll summarize our written testimony. Uh, we strongly

support Intro 369. The issue of compost processing capacity could be the most important issue to come before this committee this year. This could be a legacy issue for you. Here's why. Composting is the— uh, organics are the single largest portion of the waste stream. A third of our waste is food scraps, yard waste, food-soil, paper. If it goes to landfills, it creates methane. If it goes to incinerators, its high moisture content fouls up the burning process and generates localized pollution. If it goes to sewage treatment plants for co-digestion, while that may be better than landfilling and incineration, uh, mixing it with sewage sludge means that you cannot compost the digestate, and so it's not the highest and best use for compostable material. We definitely need more capacity for composting in-city, which also brings jobs and could save money in our exporting costs over time. We hope to be able to work with you and, uh, Sandy Nurse to, uh, get this bill in shape where it can be accepted. But we do say that, uh, there— it's hard to find a more important issue for the long-term

sustainability of our system, uh, than to address the issue of getting additional composting capacity in the city. Very quickly, we also strongly support Intro 367. Uh, this is an environmental justice issue that has lingered for years. Uh, three communities get the overwhelming bulk of commercial waste. Opening up the modern marine transfer stations in the city's own rail facilities to commercial waste, uh, could alleviate that burden. We know that, uh, Commissioner Anderson has the expertise, the staff, and the authority, to get this work done, if he, uh, is authorized to do so by the Council. Finally, we strongly oppose Intro 911. Uh, this, uh, bill would, uh, directly, uh, run counter to the intent of the Council when it passed, uh, the, uh, waste zone legislation. It was debated for years. Uh, in fact, only one of the three Staten Island, uh, council members voted against this introduction. So in other words, there was support. They had the opportunity. There was support. The program is ongoing now. Uh, and, uh, it would also set a horrible precedent to exempt one borough from

citywide legislation. So we urge that that, uh, program be sent to the landfills. And last but not least, we also strongly support 356, allowing community composting operations to charge for organic waste drop-offs. We explain why in our testimony. Thank you for your attention.

CHIEF SANCHEZ: Thank you. Appreciate it.

JAMIR RUSH: Uh, good morning, and thank you for the opportunity for me to testify. My name is Jamir Rush. And I work with Cafeteria Culture. And I urge you to pass Intro 369, which will require composting processing ka- oh, pardon me- which will require compost processing capacity in every borough of New York City. This year, Cafeteria Culture launched a pilot program that showed what local composting can accomplish. I was hired as a compost creator to collect cafeteria food scraps, educate students about composting, and transport those scraps to nearby community composting sites or on-site tumblers. Since late October 2005, I've led students to divert more than 1 ton of food scraps from just four schools, PS46, PS34, PS15, and PS30. Thank you.

Every pound of compost we use in the school gardens we created at these schools comes from compost, powers local composting sites. So instead of trucking our food waste across the city and burdening our other communities, we turn these food scraps into, into a local resource that nourishes our gardens, supports environmental education, and strengthens our neighborhoods. This is exactly why Intro 369 matters. Local composting reduces unnecessary truck traffic, builds resilient neighborhood infrastructure, and creates opportunities for education, jobs, and community engagement. Our pilot proves that integrating school cafeterias into neighborhood composting is practical, efficient, and scalable. Just one compost coordinator, me, working with four diverted— whoa— just one compost coordinator working with four schools diverted more than 1 ton— diverted more than a ton of organic matter in a matter of months. Imagine how every school in every borough could achieve— whoa— imagine what every school in every borough could achieve with the right infrastructure.

We ask you to please pass Intro 369 and invest in a composting system that keeps resources where they are generated and benefits every New York City community. Thank you.

CHIEF SANCHEZ: Thank you for your testimony.

JAMIR RUSH: Whoa, buzzing me (sic).

RHONDA KAISER: Hi. I'm Rhonda Kaiser. I'm Program and Policy Director for Cafeteria Culture. Um, our team works together with Mr. Rush to evaluate and to shape the food scraps collection pilot. Um, and one of the biggest lessons from our pilot is how efficient it is to collect food scraps from schools. Um, we realize that our, um, opinion differs from DSMY about whether this is possible— Intro 369 is possible. But it's a new idea. And new ideas require conversational generosity. So that's what we're hoping to, um, engage in. Um, and, um, that's what we're hoping to receive. Um, and because in just four schools, one compost coordinator diverted more than a ton of food scraps in only a few months, reaching that same amount of, um, people,

individuals, by asking individual households to separate and set out their food scraps would require educating and engaging hundreds, if not thousands, of families. Schools generate large consistent volumes of food scraps every day, making it the easiest and most efficient places to recover organics. And then by integrating schools into neighborhood composting systems, students learn how, and they learn why, and actually how, to divert their, their food scraps through hands-on education. And while teaching them about recycling programs and the virtue of separating their waste is a great idea, actually giving them the value of the benefit of their so-called waste, but actually resources, they actually feel the difference, and it's, it's, um, it's palpable what students, um, can understand about it. And I've said this many times, but our students from PS/MS 46 visited Polo Grounds. And they looked around, and they said to Domingo, do you own this site? And he, and he said, this is funded by taxes, so technically, we all own this site. And the kids beamed to think that they owned a site that they could actually make

a difference and make a huge difference. These are students- some of our most vulnerable students, who could make a huge difference where the Brown Bin Program doesn't exist. Um, our program disrupts the truck-based, and harmful and polluting, industrial model. And it offers a new solution. And another world is possible. Thank you.

CHIEF SANCHEZ: Thank you. And I plead- and with that, um, this panel is relieved. Thank you so much for- uh, can I please bring up, uh, Mary Ellen Sullivan, Matthew Chiavello, and Wendy Frank? You may begin.

MARY ELLEN SULLIVAN: Okay. Great. I am Mary Ellen Sullivan. The Manhattan, Brooklyn, Bronx, and Queens Solid Waste Advisory Board strongly support Intro 69- 369 and its goal to establish local composting capacity in each of the five boroughs. Intro 369 provides a clear and practical framework for developing a resilient, equitable, and locally based, organics processing infrastructure, consistent with the SWAB's (sic) ongoing recommendation that New York City should prioritize local composting. New

York City residents and commercial businesses generate almost 2 million tons of organic material annually, with the vast majority of this being sent to landfills, incinerators, or co-digestion facilities. New York City is losing out on an opportunity to turn our goin- organic waste into something valuable, new jobs, additional tax revenue, reduced environmental harm, and locally made compost to apply in our parks and neighborhoods. Codigesting organics with sewage creates more sewage sludge, a waste that is difficult and expensive to dispose of. Current DEP policy is to maximize beneficial use of biosolids. That means land application. Yet municipalities across New York State and the entire country are waking up to the shock of land polluted by biosolids. And they are beginning to oppose this practice and take action. The policy of our own New York Farm Bureau is to stand in opposition to land application of biosolids that have detectable levels of PFAS, PFOS, and heavy metals. The solution is obvious, compost our waste organically. To strengthen Intro 369, we respectfully recommend the

following modifications. Reestablish the Compost Siting Task Force so that Section 2B of Intro 369 can be realized, explicitly include and prioritize nonprofit organizations, including but not limited to the New York City Compost Network, as eligible entities to participate in this activity, ensure that facility siting decisions incorporate environmental justice considerations and avoid the environmental justice errors of our current waste system, integrate robust public education to the rollout, and integrate workforce development into this.

CHIEF SANCHEZ: Thank you very much-

MARY ELLEN SULLIVAN: Thank you.

MATTHEW CIVELLO: Uh, good morning. Uh, I'm Matthew Civello, Chair of the Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board. And I thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony at today's hearing. Uh, the Solid Waste Advisory Board supports Intro 367, which would require the Department of Sanitation to accept commercial solid waste at city-owned marine and rail transfer stations and publicly report the amount and type of waste received. Implemented

carefully, Intro 367 could significantly reduce waste transfer burdens and truck traffic in overburdened communities of Brooklyn Community District 1, Queens Community District 12, Bronx Community Districts 1 and 2. Intro 367 builds directly on Local Law 152, the Waste Equity Law, enacted to reduce the disproportionate impacts of truck traffic and waste processing in environmental justice communities, and with a hope of preventing new neighborhoods from becoming the next dumping grounds. Intro 367 could now help provide meaningful relief to those communities that have carried those burdens for decades. Before the— this committee in 2023, the Department of Sanitation stated that it had asked commercial waste zone proposers whether they were interested in using the city's marine transfer stations and that the RFP process would help determine that demand. We respectfully request that those findings be made public, along with a public evaluation of the feasibility and benefits of accepting commercial waste at these facilities. A better utilization of the city's marine and rail

transfer stations, as suggested by Intro 367, can improve the distribution and commercial waste— of commer, of commercial waste across the City of New York, reduce truck traffic in historically overburdened neighborhoods, and help fulfill the promise of the Waste Equity Law. Again, thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

CHIEF SANCHEZ: Thank you so much for your testimony.

WENDY FRANK: Hi there. Wendy Frank from the Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board. The Manhattan, Brooklyn, Bronx, and Queens, Solid Waste Advisory Boards support both Intro 356 and Intro 353, and commend the council for advancing these important measures. Intro thra- 356 would provide community composters with a more sustainable and diversified funding model by allowing them to charge for food scrap collections and sell the compost they produce. The SWABS' recommend expanding the bill to also allow community composters to charge local entities for food scrap pickup and drop-off services. This additional flexibility would strengthen the long-term

financial sustainability of community compost programs across New York City. The SWABS also support Intro 353, establishing a commercial waste zone working group, with representation from waste industry labor, environmental organizations, environmental justice advocates, and micro haulers. This diverse membership will ensure that commercial waste zones achieve the objectives established under Local Law 199 of 2019. We recommend the working group issue an annual public report evaluating the implementation of commercial waste zones, including their impacts on truck traffic, emissions, public and worker safety, and other key performance measures. At the conclusion of its work, the group will also issue recommendations for improving the program. Finally, we recommend adding commercial waste kuh, c-customers to the working group and providing opportunities for solid waste advisory boards and other stakeholders to observe meetings. Greater transparency and broader participation will strengthen both the working group and the successful implementation of commercial waste zones. Thank you

for your consideration. And also, you may remember me from the last hearing, when I informed you about bananas. And when you have a large citywide event with over 40,000 people and you don't compost those bananas, it's bananas.

(Laughter)

CHIEF SANCHEZ: Thank you. Thank you so much for your testimony. Um, and this panel is relieved. Um, and for our next and last panel, um, can I please have Domingo Morales, Justin Green, and Aaron Wright? Domingo, you can begin.

DOMINGO MORALES: Thank you for having me. Thank you for having me. I'm Domingo Morales from Compost Power. We operate eight compost sites on public housing campuses throughout the city. Um, and I'm here to support Intro 369. I think it would behoove New York City to have more local composting in New York. I think the seven transfer stations that we do have, it's, like a double route, where we have to take it to a transfer station emulsify it, turn it to a liquid form, and then take it to a water treatment plant. And that just doubles the amount of

trucking that we need. Also, there's a lot of biosolids that end up in landfill anyway. I think with the compost sites that we have in New York City, we're able to keep a hyperlocal model, like at our public housing campuses. We're able to collect the waste on campus, process it on campus, distribute the compost on campus, grow free, free food for residents, provide environmental education for young adults, as well as the kids who attend the local schools in the community, and even in some cases seniors are coming out to sift through finished compost and use their finished compost on their gardening efforts. Um, I think public housing has the, um, second largest tree canopy in New York City. So it's beneficial to have local processing sites on public housing. And I think with Intro 369, Department of Sanitation can't do it by themselves. So they'll need to tap into other community composting support networks, they'll need to partner with New York City Housing Authority, they'll need to partner with Parks Department, in order to get the space to build these composting sites that we need,

so it will provide a more holistic approach to organic waste in New York City, and will provide more of a community tapped in. Um, so I'm in support for that bill. I also think, uh, Intro 356- we're in support for that as well, because that's a, um- those are rules that were in place when Department of Sanitation controlled the New York City Compost Project. Um, they no longer fund the New York City Compost Project. We now have the New York City Community Compost Network that's funded by City Council. Um, and I think if we allow people to explore different options for funding, we'll be able to make community composting a little bit more sustainable.

CHIEF SANCHEZ: Thank you so much for your testimony.

JUSTIN GREEN: Hi. I'm Justin Green. I'm the executive director of Big Reuse. Thanks for, uh, having us all here to testify. I want to second pretty much everything Domingo said. Um, both of us have been composting in, uh, New York City for a while now. And we can see the capacity that's

available in the city to grow green infrastructure, to increase composting, uh, capacity throughout the city. So at NYCHA (sic) like Domingo's piloted and, and, and run for years, um, in Parks. We're working with Central Park to set up a site- or we have a site operating in, in Central Park now to compost all their, uh, landscape scraping waste. We can expand that to other parks. Uh, we all work- both of us work in community gardens and helping them maximize their composting. And there's large-scale, uh, brownfield sites in northern Astoria, in, uh, East Williamsburg, that are huge brownfield sites that could be, you know, not great for building residential 'cause of the brownfield nature, but could be used for green infrastructure proj- projects like this. Um, and there are examples, uh, of these kinds of large-scale capacity, uh, systems being installed in buildings, enclosed. So there's no, um, odor issues going to the outside community. So it's possible. You know, if we can dream big, we can make this happen in the city, reduce our impact on other communities from exporting our waste, reduce

our reliance on anaerobic digestion, which a, a lot of speakers have talked about, produces unusable biosolids at this point, um, and not the compost we had all fought to make— have be produced, uh, through all of our work. So the biosolids are contaminated with everything that goes down into the sewer— PFAS, microplastics, um, anything else everyone pours down the drain in the city, ends up in our biosolids at the sewage treatment plant. So it's not particularly usable. Um, but compost is. And with growing resiliency needs in the city, and compost provides sort of greater water absorption, greater plant growth, and other great green infrastructure, uh, improvements. And I think we could do it. Thanks.

CHIEF SANCHEZ: And no better way to, uh, end our, uh, hearing today, than— wait (sic).

ERIN WRIGHT: Thank you so much. Good morning, Chair. And thank you for holding this hearing. My name is Erin Wright. And I'm here representing Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso. He appreciates your ongoing attention to the rollout of commercial waste zones, a program he

created during his time in your position. When fully implemented, this program will address issues with the private carting industry by limiting vehicle miles traveled, increasing enforcement of dangerous driving, incentivizing the replacement of out-of-date fleets, requiring more attention to worker safety, and increasing diversion of waste from landfills. Despite unfortunate delays and our continued calls for DSNY to speed up the program's rollout, the VP has been pleased with its implementation so far. Initial information indicates that increased enforcement in the active zones is leading to improved safety outcomes, that more workers now have union protection, and that the program has not caused costs to rise dramatically as some have predicted. I'm here to provide comments on the three bills being heard today in relay, in relation to CWZ, as well as Intro 369. First, Intro 353 would create a CWZ working group. The Council has been considering this bill for many years. And it's time to finally pass it. Having experts at the table from both within and outside the industry can only help guide the process

and ensure its continued success. Intro 367 would require DSNY to establish a plan for accepting commercial waste at the marine transfer stations. VP Reynoso originally introduced this bill when he was at City Council. And unfortunately, DSNY continues to slow-roll this necessary measure, which would remove dangerous and polluting waste trucks from our streets. Thanks to advocacy by the EJ community, marine transfer stations, um, remove waste by barge and rail rather than long-haul truck. This bill would push DSNY to create a clear plan that would support our EJ communities. And we urge the Council to pass it quickly. Intro 911A would increase the number of carters allowed to participate in CWZ in Staten Island. VP Reinoso has concerns about this proposal and the precedent it could set for other zones citywide. Uh, further comments on provided in writing on 369, um, in addition to a copy of our report on the bill. Thank you.

CHIEF SANCHEZ: Um, I just want to show everyone what experience looks like. Uh (indiscernible). Um, uh, we really thank you for all

your testimony, um, and your reports and, um, Brooklyn Borough President, uh, Antonio Reynoso, for all of his work on this committee, um, and the work that he will continue to do. So thank you. Um, and with that, um, this panel is dismissed. Um, and we thought we were done. We are not done. Um, they have joined us on Zoom from the ether. Lou, can you hear us?

CLERK: You may begin.

LOU DUBUQUE: Yes, I can hear everyone. Uh, good afternoon, Chair Sanchez and members of the committee. My name is Lou Dubuque, Vice President for the Northeast Region for the National Waste and Recycling Association. NWRA represents the private companies that collect and manage commercial waste and recyclables throughout New York City. Our members will serve customers in 19 of the city's 20 commercial waste zones when fully implemented. I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify in Intros 353, 367, and 911A. First, NWRA strongly supports Intro 353, intre- establishing a Commercial Waste Zone Working Group. Two years ago, I testified

before this committee in support of creating a formal stakeholder working group, because we believed a program as large and complex as the CWZ would require ongoing collaboration. As implementation has progressed, that has proved to be exactly the case. The CWZ program is unlike anything else in the country. While there have been challenges, our industry remains fully committed to making it successful. Our members have invested millions of dollars in new equipment, facilities, employees, and infrastructure, to help achieve the city's goals of improving safety, reducing traffic, lowering emissions, and providing reliable services. A permanent working group will allow DSNY, industry, labor, elected officials, and other stakeholders, to identify challenges early and develop practical solutions together, and continue improving the program over time. We respectfully urge the committee to aproo, approve Intro 353. Regarding Intro 367, NWRA supports expanding environmentally responsible transportation options, including greater use of marine and rail. Those tho- those are all

goals will be share. However, we have serious concerns if participation becomes mandatory. During the CWZ procurement, companies developed bids, negotiated disposal agreements, invested in infrastructure, and established customer pricing, based on the rules that existed at the time.

Rek-eye- requiring companies-

CHIEF SANCHEZ: Thank you.

LOU DUBUQUE: -after contract-

CHIEF SANCHEZ: Your time expired.

LOU DUBUQUE: -have- huh. Okay. We, we've submitted, uh, written testimony, uh, uh, earlier. So you'll have the chance to read that there.

CHIEF SANCHEZ: Thank you so much, Lou (sic).

LOU DUBUQUE: Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

CHIEF SANCHEZ: Thank you so much. Um, eh, are there any other, uh, takers for comments at this time? Going once, going twice. Hearing none, happy summer everyone. I will see you in September.

(Gavel)

C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date September 14, 2026