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In the Matter of the  
NEW YORK CITY  
VOTER ASSISTANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
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B E F O R E:

ARTHUR CHANG, Chairperson

100 Church Street  
New York, New York

May 17, 2016

Transcription from Videotaped Proceedings

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Campaign Finance Board - Voter Assistance Advisory Committee  
May 17, 2016

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

ARTHUR CHANG, Chairperson

AMY LOPREST, Executive Director

JOHN AVLON

DANIELE GERARD

JOAN GIBBS

UMAIR KHAN

PATRICK RYAN

MAZEDA UDDIN

ONIDA COWARD MAYERS

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MR. CHANG: (Inaudible) -- the people to go to -- ordinary New Yorkers to go to Albany to testify and to meet with members of the legislature to advocate for better voting rights, and about 200 people from all five boroughs joined us, as well as folks from around the state.

We had over 70 meetings with legislatures. We held a press rally that was moderated by our amazing Director of Voter Assistance, Onida Coward Mayers. Speakers included members of the Senate and Assembly and local and statewide partners, and we got great media coverage in the New York Times, The Bronx Chronicle, Gotham Gazette, Capital Tonight, and others. And because of the advocacy of ordinary people, some of whom actually are in this audience, the Voter Empowerment Act picked up five additional Assembly sponsors and five Senate sponsors. Early voting has picked up seven Assembly sponsors and five Senate sponsors, and the Voter Friendly Ballot Act picked up three sponsors in the Senate.

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2 For those who are not familiar with  
3 the points that we're advocating for, I  
4 encourage you to go to [votebetterny.org](http://votebetterny.org),  
5 and go to [change.org](http://change.org) and look for a  
6 petition at Vote Better NY and please sign  
7 it and write an e-mail and call your  
8 legislators.

9 We had a -- as a Charter mandate, we  
10 are responsible for preparing and  
11 publishing an annual report by the 30th of  
12 April every year regarding voter  
13 registration and voter participation. This  
14 report is available tonight and if you  
15 haven't received one, you can pick it up  
16 here or make sure that you get one. This  
17 is what, Onida, our third report? This is  
18 our third report and I think it's our best  
19 one, maybe the fourth one. It's just a  
20 terrific report.

21 I also encourage you to look at the  
22 Comptroller's Office. Scott Stringer has  
23 written his own report about the state of  
24 voting which is very in depth and detailed  
25 and I encourage everybody to look at that

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2 as well.

3 Today, we do want to mention the  
4 loss of someone that we consider the,  
5 really the founder of the Voter Committee  
6 in New York. As those of you who may or  
7 may not know, this Committee which serves  
8 as part of the New York City Campaign  
9 Finance Board, is the only place in New  
10 York City where representatives of all the  
11 citywide elective offices as well as the  
12 executive directors of the two main  
13 agencies involved in the oversight of  
14 voting, mainly the Board of Elections and  
15 the Campaign Finance Board, sit in one  
16 place to talk to the public about how we  
17 improve voter engagement and actually the  
18 voter activities.

19 And so the person who really was  
20 kind of the brain -- really created that  
21 was Jane Kalmus and, you know, I just  
22 wanted to actually call Onida Coward Mayers  
23 who's our Director of Voter Engagement, to  
24 actually say a few words about Jane.

25 MS. MAYERS: Hello. Can you hear

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2 me? Great. Thank you very much, Art.

3 If you look actually inside your  
4 annual report, one of the, I think right  
5 after you have Art's wonderful letter,  
6 there is a quick note that I was fortunate  
7 enough because of the Committee to pen, and  
8 I won't read all of it, but you will see  
9 inside here how special Jane was, not only  
10 to myself, but to everyone here and the  
11 impact that she made.

12 I will say here -- I say that one of  
13 the biggest standouts was that she was  
14 unapologetically demanding and if anyone  
15 had ever met her for five minutes, you  
16 would understand exactly what that meant.  
17 She was going to make sure that New Yorkers  
18 were first and that they were always  
19 considered in all matters where nonpartisan  
20 voter efforts were taking place. She made  
21 sure that we were all trained under her  
22 doctrine of how you rally the troops, how  
23 you inform New Yorkers and how you get them  
24 out and moving. This was a job and a  
25 mission that she took very seriously. She

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2 was born in the year of the Suffrage Act so  
3 she was, as we would say, born to do this  
4 job. And the same way she took it  
5 seriously, she made sure that we all did as  
6 well. I think we all live still in her  
7 light and in her devotion to this work.

8 So if you do have an opportunity, I  
9 would recommend that you read a little bit  
10 about her, and there's different things and  
11 we've released a press release and a  
12 statement as well, and you will see that  
13 she was a confidant of mayors, governors,  
14 presidents, their wives, first female Press  
15 Secretary in New York City. So we're very  
16 proud that her legacy lives on with all of  
17 us.

18 MR. CHANG: So thank you, Onida.  
19 Amy, report from the Executive  
20 Director.

21 MS. LOPREST: I just have a brief  
22 report. You know, one of the, I think  
23 we're going to hear a lot about this today,  
24 but of course as everyone in this room  
25 knows, that New York held its presidential

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2 primary on April 19th, and for the first  
3 time in three decades, New York voters had  
4 the opportunity to actually play a pivotal  
5 role in both of the major party nominating  
6 contests. Unfortunately, many voters faced  
7 unacceptable challenges in casting their  
8 ballots that day and I'm sure we're going  
9 to hear from a lot of you today about your  
10 experiences.

11 But news reports detailed how  
12 thousands of registered voters were removed  
13 from the voter rolls. It means that 38,000  
14 voters in Brooklyn alone were required to  
15 cast an affidavit ballot. Investigations  
16 are ongoing into the presidential primary  
17 by the Comptroller, the State Attorney  
18 General, and we are going to keep  
19 monitoring that.

20 As Art mentioned, you know, to put a  
21 positive note on it, these events exposed  
22 real fundamental flaws and shortcomings of  
23 our antiquated election system and that our  
24 May 3rd Voter Day in Albany really sought  
25 to bring that message to Albany to get them



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to really change and improve those antiquated laws. That is one of the things that this Committee has been doing for many years.

Also on a more local note, I testified on behalf of the Campaign Finance Board before the City Council on May 2nd on a series of bills that were legislation recommended by the Campaign Finance Board in its 2013 Post-election Report. All of those pieces of legislation, there were eight of them in total, were to improve the experience of candidates and the voters in New York City elections, and we are looking forward to working with the City Council to pass that legislation.

Also, I testified for the City Council's Government Operations Committee on the CFB's budget last Friday and a number of voter issues arose during that testimony; suggestions for improved projects to engage students, improvements to the way we do the Voter Guide, and all of those are issues that we'll be looking

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2 into and working on in the year to come as  
3 we, the Campaign Finance Board, really  
4 focus forward looking beyond the  
5 presidential election to the municipal  
6 elections in 2017.

7 MR. CHANG: Thank you, Amy.

8 We're going to -- we can now take a  
9 vote on the minutes, I believe. Thank you,  
10 Daniele.

11 So can we have a motion to approve  
12 the minutes from our last meeting?

13 MR. KHAN: Aye.

14 MR. CHANG: Second?

15 MS. GERARD: Second.

16 MR. CHANG: All in favor?

17 (Chorus of Ayes.)

18 MR. CHANG: Thank you.

19 So with that, I think we'll bring  
20 the meeting of our Committee to an  
21 adjournment and we'll open up for the  
22 public hearing. Just if anybody here is a  
23 tweeter, the Twitter handle for our  
24 Committee is nycvotes. So it's @nycvotes.  
25 You can also tweet to me directly @achangnyc.

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2 MR. KHAN: That's a nice plug there,  
3 Art. Anybody want to follow Art?

4 MR. CHANG: Umair, you do -- what is  
5 it, Umair?

6 Mine is achangnyc.

7 Umair? Do you want to do a plug to  
8 the Public Advocates Office?

9 (No response.)

10 MR. CHANG: So I think -- we'll  
11 start our testimony. We have a podium and  
12 a mic here. So just in the interest of  
13 time, if everybody can keep their comments  
14 to two to three minutes, and I will  
15 actually be emphatic in trying to get  
16 people to be brief. And if you have  
17 written testimony, that would also be very  
18 helpful. All testimony here tonight will  
19 be published on our website, any written  
20 testimony, and obviously everything  
21 available by Twitter, is on Twitter for  
22 everyone to see. So, you know -- and any  
23 testimony actually submitted after today  
24 will also be accepted and posted.

25 So with that, I'd like to start and

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2 the first --

3 MS. LOPREST: Can I just add to  
4 that? Obviously this meeting is being live  
5 streamed so people can be watching it right  
6 now, but also the video of it will be  
7 archived on our website, cfb -- nyccfb.info  
8 Sorry, too many websites going around. So  
9 So if you want to look at our website you can  
10 look in the press section and this video will  
11 be archived there.

12 (Inaudible discussion.)

13 MS. LOPREST: What's the (inaudible)  
14 press@nyccfb.info. New York City, n-y-c,  
15 Campaign Finance Board, c-f-b, dot info. It's  
16 in the report, too.

17 MR. CHANG: Well, first up, I would  
18 like those who have to go home and do  
19 homework to open up the hearing.

20 MS. MAYERS: Well, why don't we  
21 sit at number one because they're all  
22 short? The numbers are all low.

23 MR. CHANG: I want to start with the  
24 students. We'll get them out of here.

25 (Discussion of speaking order.)



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2 freelance work with most of the networks,  
3 with ABC, CBS, NBC, MSNBC, CNBC, Fox News  
4 channel. So I work in television news as  
5 well as independently as a documentary  
6 filmmaker. I released a documentary in  
7 2008 about the systemic problems of U.S.  
8 elections that discourage participation,  
9 and that film is called "Holler Back: Not  
10 voting in an American town".

11 I'm very familiar with the Campaign  
12 Finance Board and I really congratulate on  
13 the -- the work that you do to improve  
14 election integrity. I've been invited to  
15 submit an article to a statistical journal  
16 regarding the research that I've been doing  
17 about statistical analysis of the U.S.  
18 elections, and as part of this work I  
19 examined the statistical data on the New  
20 York City April 19th primary. The research  
21 has been verified by two separate analysts,  
22 and it has been confirmed to be accurate.

23 The data indicates a pattern in the  
24 election returns that is concerning. It  
25 means that some of the results potentially

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do not represent the actual intent of the voters, either through error or possibly manipulation. Initial estimates indicate the results in Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island could be off by more than ten percent. Because this type of analysis requires precinct-level data, we have so far only analyzed the five boroughs of Manhattan where precinct-level data was available, so we have not examined the data for the entire state, just the five boroughs in Manhattan.

The data was shown to a former president of the American Statistical Association who said, "As a statistician, I find the results of the 2016 primary voting in New York unusual. In fact, I found the patterns unexpected, suspicious even. There was a greater deal of smoothness in the outcomes versus the roughness that is usual typical in raw, real data." And what he's saying by that, he's saying that he's not comfortable that the results look like an organic pattern of what you see when people vote. You know, one person votes one way,

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one person votes another way. When the results are incorrect, sometimes you see what looks like more of a mathematical pattern. It's important to be clear about what statistics can and can't do.

Walter Mebane, a professor of statistics and political science at the University of Michigan says, "Election forensics do not produce definitive proof of fraud, unlike direct observation of ballot box stuffing. Instead, the method produces probabilistic evidence of anomalies that are suggestive of fraud." So what he's saying there is that, you know, we're not talking about proof, we're saying these results are something that professional statisticians looking at have used words like suspicious or they're uncomfortable with these results.

If there was concern about the accuracy of the results, and there is, the best way to determine the actual intent of the voters is to manually count the ballots, and we're lucky because in New



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2 York we have paper ballots that we could  
3 manually count, and there is actually a  
4 petition in circulation, also on change.org  
5 like your petition, that is requesting of  
6 the Attorney General and the Comptroller,  
7 Scott Stringer, to begin with a ten percent  
8 manual recount that would be open to the  
9 public, open to the media and supervised by  
10 a professional statistical expert. I  
11 encourage everybody to find that petition  
12 on change.org and sign it. It's under if  
13 you search for "New York hand recount,"  
14 you'll find that petition.

15 We live in an era where data is  
16 under constant attack. The IRS is fielding  
17 one million data attacks per day. I think  
18 it's really important to let that sink in;  
19 one million data attacks per day at the IRS.

20 On May 4th, Attorney General  
21 Eric Schneiderman announced that his office  
22 has received over 40 percent increase, an  
23 over 40 percent increase in data breach  
24 notifications involving New Yorkers so far  
25 this year, that's as compared to last year,

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a 40 percent increase. And NPR reported that in February, hackers stole \$81 million from the New York Federal Reserve. Now, if the New York Federal Reserve is not able to protect itself against hackers, it's hard to imagine that our little Board of Elections would not be vulnerable.

MR. CHANG: Do you have a lot more to go?

MS. FRIES'DAT: No, I'm almost done.

MR. CHANG: Okay. Terrific. Because I think the point about the vulnerability of the system that you're trying to make is understood.

MS. FRIES'DAT: Yeah. Great.

I just want to say that previously in New York, we did have a really great law that required every race in every election to have a three percent manual recount, and for some reason that law was changed last year to allow the recount to be done by machines, which defeats the purpose. It would be better if that law was changed back to include -- to mandate a manual recount of all the elections.

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Long term, we need to end the era where elections are administered by partisan officials, elections need to be administered by technically proficient professionals who are well-versed in security and complex database management, and it would also be best to eliminate voting machines and move to hand counted paper ballots. Thank you so much.

(Applause.)

MS. DAVIDSON: So my name is Zoe Davidson and I am a freshman at Dalton and I attended the Voter Advocacy Day with my school, and more specifically with a club that is new this year aimed at increasing political engagement within our high school in particular. And we brought a group of 13 students up to Albany with us this year and everyone there was incredibly passionate about voting rights and election reform, and more specifically to us, it was -- our main goal was that we wanted to see our election system updated from the archaic and complicated one it is now to a

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2 much more -- to one that is much more  
3 easier to -- much easier to use by the time  
4 that we are able to vote ourselves because  
5 all the students who attended were freshman  
6 who every single day we hear horror stories  
7 about people being disenfranchised, and we  
8 want to ensure that when it is our chance  
9 to vote, we are able to so. And further,  
10 it's important to us because we aren't able  
11 to actually vote, that we remain civically  
12 engaged and help others who are able to  
13 vote protect that right.

14 And so everyone who attended  
15 reflected that it was an incredible  
16 experience, not only because we got to  
17 learn about election reform and voting  
18 rights on a local level, but also because  
19 we all felt like we had the opportunity to  
20 actually make a change and help get these  
21 cosponsors on all these incredibly  
22 important pieces of legislation, and we're  
23 continuing our efforts. We just had a  
24 meeting yesterday where we wrote e-mails to  
25 all the legislators that we met with.

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2 We're going to continue to tweet and call  
3 these representatives, and I also have  
4 another student who attended with me who's  
5 going to talk a little bit more about his  
6 particular experience.

7 MR. COX: I'm Malcolm Cox. I also  
8 go to Dalton and I'm apart of the club. We  
9 met -- the assembly members we met with,  
10 when we discussed the legislation with  
11 them, some of them mentioned that they  
12 hadn't heard about this legislation so they  
13 were going to look into it. And it was  
14 just a great experience to get into  
15 politics and to make a change in our  
16 communities, and to make voting easier for  
17 when we're able to vote.

18 MR. CHANG: Thank you very much.  
19 Thanks for all your work.

20 Number three. Is there a number  
21 three?

22 MS. MAYERS: Three, four and five,  
23 if you'd like to come up and stand on the  
24 side here.

25 MS. GRUNDFEST-FRIGERI: Hello. My

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2 name is Beth Grundfest-Frigeri. My Twitter  
3 handle is malkabethwendy, M-A-L-K-A, and I  
4 am right now in the New York City adult  
5 family shelter system with my husband and I  
6 came here -- I've been at a couple of  
7 meetings of the Board of Elections, one of  
8 which I testified in, to discuss the  
9 irregularities that I noticed, and I  
10 brought evidence here and I'm going to give  
11 this stuff to you guys so that you have the  
12 details in print. And that is that my  
13 husband and I both changed our voter  
14 registration from our former county of  
15 Rockland to Queens. We're out in Arverne.  
16 And we put in our registration form the  
17 same day, same time in the Post Office. We  
18 got our confirmations back same time, same  
19 day, but later on I noticed that I was not  
20 on the State website.

21 My husband is a life long registered  
22 Republican. I switched parties from the  
23 Republican to the Democratic party this  
24 cycle, and so to me, when I tried to ask  
25 questions of Commissioner Ryan, he said

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2 well, it was a matter of the changeover in  
3 the date because you did this in October.  
4 Well, to me, if that were the case, then my  
5 husband wouldn't be there and,  
6 you know either -- so to me, that's a problem.  
7 You know, if two people in the shelter  
8 system can't put their stuff in and expect  
9 that it's going to go on -- again, I mean,  
10 we're right beside each other, same  
11 address, so it shouldn't be -- there  
12 shouldn't be any discrepancy there. And to  
13 me, as someone who straddles the party  
14 lines, it's important that republican,  
15 democrat, whatever you are, you get your  
16 vote to count, you get it to be there.

17 And I also wanted to report the  
18 other abnormality that, you know, I had my  
19 card and I have a photo copy of this in  
20 here, as well as I do my older one from  
21 Rockland, and to me, it's essential that  
22 I -- that -- you know, it's hard enough  
23 surviving the adult family shelter system  
24 as two people with disabilities. You know,  
25 that's bad enough, but to have to and

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2 realize that you have to keep onto this  
3 piece of paper, you know, wherever you are,  
4 either put it in a lock box or make sure  
5 that you do not leave a room without it  
6 for -- because again, I did this in  
7 October. To realize that that's what's  
8 required to vote, it seems like a bit of an  
9 obscenity to me.

10 And I also want to mention, I was  
11 there last Friday to hear the testimony of  
12 both Ryan and you, Ms. Loprest. That was  
13 incredibly impressive, and it occurs to me  
14 really that -- the difference in the  
15 agencies, and it also occurs to me that  
16 there is so many easier ways. And I'm also  
17 glad that I got a hold of and read through  
18 your report because I saw that one of the  
19 outreach agencies to register voters is  
20 actually the center for homelessness. And  
21 it occurs to me that I didn't even find out  
22 that I had outgoing mail until March of  
23 this year. I've been in that particular  
24 facility since August, last August, and to  
25 me, if you don't even -- you can't even



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find out about outgoing mail -- and again, it's not like I'm clueless, I'm out and about, and until in essence it would have been too late.

Then there's a problem in terms of the concept and it's a big one, in terms of registering people that are homeless to vote and to me, one of the seeming solutions that I'd really like to offer you guys is that one of the places that for better or for worse, we kind of live is the local HRA Offices that are nearest to us and I really do want to recommend to you guys, if I can, that you try to advertise that your voter guide is available there and to people, because again, we're there for hour upon hour, whether we like it or not, that's the system. It helps to actually be able to find a way to be civically engaged in what will be in your home and to me, the voter guide would be a step in that, in addition to the often half cutoff copies of voter registration forms at the backs of our packets.

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2 MR. CHANG: Thank you very much for  
3 your testimony. We certainly, I think got  
4 the point.

5 Joan, do you have a question?

6 MS. GIBBS: Yes, I do. I have a  
7 question and a comment.

8 I appreciate your testimony as well,  
9 but I think that simply having the  
10 advertisement in HRA's office wouldn't be  
11 sufficient because what would be better, if  
12 there was a computer or copies of the  
13 guides themselves, because not everybody  
14 has a cell phone or a smart phone. I mean,  
15 I'm struggling with how do we deal with  
16 that problem, that really there's a --  
17 you know, not everybody in New York City  
18 has a computer or --

19 MS. GRUNDFEST-FRIGERI: Well, that's  
20 what I'm saying, is that in essence, have a  
21 packet -- have a stack out there and have  
22 another flier out in the hallway to let  
23 them know that the stack's there.

24 MS. GIBBS: Thank you.

25 MS. LOPREST: One of the things we

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2 do do is do bulk distributions of the voter  
3 guide to a lot of different places  
4 including libraries. I mean, we'll look,  
5 you know, for when we do the print guide next  
6 in 2017, to look at distributing it to HRA  
7 facilities too.

8 MR. AVLON: Did you submit your  
9 party of change registration before the  
10 cutoff date or are they saying you did not?

11 MS. GRUNDFEST-FRIGERI: Oh, no.  
12 They claim they have me down correctly.  
13 Here, let me -- and it's correctly. You  
14 can see the documents. You can see this is  
15 the original copy. This was handed in and  
16 this was correct and I was able to vote  
17 with no problem. So again, to me, I did  
18 everything right and it was still a mess.

19 MR. AVLON: Well, you're one of many  
20 people who tried to change party of  
21 registration who had real problems, I think  
22 partly because of onerous early deadlines  
23 and partly because of process. I  
24 appreciate you telling us that.

25 MS. UDDIN: (Inaudible.)

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2 MS. GRUNDFEST-FRIGERI: No, October.  
3 I, as someone who again, straddles the  
4 party lines, I pick who I want by July and  
5 I change accordingly when I need to.

6 MR. CHANG: Thank you, Beth. We  
7 really appreciate you coming out.

8 MS. MAYERS: I just want to ask you  
9 one question. Do you have the address of  
10 that HRA office that you go to or where is  
11 it -- or what neighborhood?

12 MS. GRUNDFEST-FRIGERI: It's in  
13 Arverne Beach, I think 50 something.

14 MS. MAYERS: Okay. Great. Thank  
15 you.

16 (Applause.)

17 MR. CHANG: Just as a, I think for  
18 everyone's edification, and if you go to  
19 [votebetterny.org](http://votebetterny.org), one of the three bills  
20 that we are advocating for is called the  
21 Voter Empowerment Act, and among the things  
22 that it does is it calls for a seamless  
23 online voter registration system so that  
24 you can manage and update your addresses.  
25 It calls for an end to the one-year

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2 requirement for party change. It also  
3 calls for the automatic registration of  
4 people who go to get services in New York  
5 City including HRA.

6 So a lot of these things are all  
7 interconnected and really online is going  
8 to make so much of it much better. So  
9 [votebetterny.org](http://votebetterny.org). Go sign our petition.

10 MS. BOGDANICH: Hi. I am Emma  
11 Bogdanich. I am a high school student at  
12 Essex Street Academy. It is in lower  
13 Manhattan.

14 I was -- I was a poll worker and you  
15 can't become a poll worker without being  
16 registered to vote. It's even -- how you  
17 sign up for it is when you have the voter  
18 registration form, it also asks, hey, would  
19 you like to be a poll worker, and I was like  
20 yes. I was actually looking forward to  
21 this. And I went to like the place where  
22 my mom was working because that was the  
23 place where I voted and it said that I did  
24 not exist. My father was there and  
25 normally that would -- like in the

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2 registration on the list, and normally that  
3 wouldn't be a problem except he's a PR  
4 person in Indiana and like a political  
5 consultant, and you have to be registered  
6 in your state, in Indiana. He is not a New  
7 Yorker.

8 So like my mom had to give me an  
9 affidavit ballot and I learned from  
10 training that they almost never count. So  
11 like, even like after that, like I -- when  
12 I tried like looking up on the NYC voter  
13 public information thing and I tried  
14 looking up my name it said no matches  
15 found, you do not exist. And well, that's  
16 sort of a impossibility, like a catch-22,  
17 except you're already a B so how did you  
18 get to B if you never passed A?

19 So I guess the moral of the story is  
20 just learn disappointment and sometimes  
21 things don't always work out for the best.

22 MR. AVLON: Don't learn that moral,  
23 no. Your father not being on, you know,  
24 siphoned off the rolls, obviously that's  
25 getting people off the rolls to be

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2 proactively ready.

3 MS. BOGDANICH: It's okay if you're  
4 a political consultant, but if you're  
5 registered in Indiana and you can vote in  
6 New York and he wasn't even there.

7 MR. AVLON: Clearly that - Indiana  
8 is the problem there, even political  
9 consultants get to vote. But what is a  
10 catch-22 is if you proactively registered  
11 and got an online prompt to be a poll  
12 worker and then your name didn't show up,  
13 that's a real problem.

14 MS. BOGDANICH: I like showed them  
15 my poll worker ID. I had my poll worker  
16 ID. My poll worker ID is even in my  
17 backpack right now, and I have a photocopy  
18 of my poll worker ID. It just was like no,  
19 you don't exist. I was a first time voter  
20 and it was happening for a lot of first  
21 time voters.

22 (Applause.)

23 MS. YELLIN: Hi. My name is  
24 Sue Yellin. I live in Prospect Lefferts  
25 Gardens, and I'm here with some members of

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2 our AD with our district leader. We formed  
3 a committee to see if we can work on some  
4 of the problems that we had. We were all  
5 poll workers. I think, of course, the  
6 purge of voters was very unfortunate  
7 and -- but I'm not going to speak on that  
8 today.

9 The two points I want to make is the  
10 affidavit ballots. I think the affidavit  
11 ballot came to the fore at this election  
12 because of the purge. Usually we have one  
13 or two, every once in awhile it goes  
14 through the whole day. Every one of our  
15 tables had at least 20 to 25 affidavits.  
16 The main problem is that there is no way of  
17 telling who wrote it, there's no stub,  
18 there's no number, there's no receipt.  
19 Once that ballot goes into the envelope and  
20 is handed back to us, we know nothing about  
21 where they go. You could tell me, the  
22 Board can tell me that they're counted but  
23 we really have no proof that those ballots  
24 were counted.

25 We had many, many people the day of



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2 the election asking, don't I get something;  
3 aren't you going to give me something to  
4 prove that I wrote this? No stub, nothing.  
5 There's nothing on it that gives us any  
6 indication of who voted. We don't put  
7 their names down, we don't put it in the  
8 book, we don't do anything.

9 So those go in the bag, the famous  
10 bag, and we never see them again, and we  
11 don't know if they're counted or not. Of  
12 course we don't know if the purge votes  
13 were counted, but the affidavits is  
14 something that can be worked on. They go  
15 on a pad just like a ballot and they have a  
16 stub and they have a number, and the number  
17 goes into the book just like the regular  
18 ballots. This is one of the shortcomings  
19 that I see.

20 Our biggest problem in the 43rd AD  
21 is that it's the largest Haitian community  
22 in the city. Ironically, we have three  
23 Haitian elected officials. We have an  
24 assembly woman -- two assembly persons and  
25 a council member. None of our -- we can't

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2 translate for them, we can't do anything  
3 for them. I speak French and Creole, but I  
4 am not allowed to tell those voters, and  
5 the ballots are so complicated. It would  
6 have been impossible for me to, in Creole,  
7 to explain that ballot. It was bad enough  
8 for English people.

9 You know, they say that you can only  
10 do Spanish and Chinese, and that has to  
11 change. This city is a  
12 multi -- multicultural country and we make  
13 no provisions for immigrants.

14 MR. AVLON: I'd like to ask a  
15 question. So Creole is one of the -- used  
16 to be one of the seven major languages that  
17 were a required basis for translation for  
18 city documents. Does that for some reason  
19 not extend to all the ballots?

20 MS. YELLIN: We've never had a  
21 translator in our polls.

22 MR. AVLON: Not a translator, the  
23 actual documents being translated.

24 MS. YELLIN: No.

25 MS. GIBBS: Whether or not a

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2 jurisdiction is required to have a language  
3 is governed by the Voting Rights Act,  
4 Section 203 I think it is, right,  
5 but -- because this is an issue that is  
6 close to me so we were working on seeing,  
7 but there is -- can't voters take in to --  
8 somebody into the booth to assist the person?

9 MS. YELLIN: But they don't -- they  
10 don't come with anybody and there's nobody  
11 in the poll that we can call on to take  
12 into the booth with them. And they just --

13 MS. GIBBS: I mean, because this is  
14 an issue that I researched a lot --

15 MS. YELLIN: And then of course that  
16 creates void ballots --

17 MS. GIBBS: -- the number of  
18 Haitians in those booths.

19 MS. YELLIN: -- so it makes it  
20 another problem. The affidavits were bad  
21 enough, but the void ballots are just as  
22 bad.

23 MS. LOPREST: Just to clarify the  
24 language issue. Commissioner -- Committee  
25 member Gibbs is correct that the Voting

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2 Rights Act does control the translation of  
3 voting materials and the Voting Rights Act  
4 requires in New York City, the translation  
5 of voting materials into Spanish, Korean  
6 Chinese, Bengali and Spanish -- did I say  
7 Spanish twice? -- and it depends on the  
8 location. The City has, for other  
9 documents like the documents that are  
10 handed out from City government agencies,  
11 has as a broader list on which Haitian  
12 Creole is one of those languages.  
13 So -- and then there's a separate series of  
14 rules regarding the translation of voting  
15 documents into Russian. Certain voting  
16 materials have to be translated by the  
17 Board of Elections into Russian so it's  
18 complicated.

19 MR. CHANG: Thank you.

20 MS. MAYERS: This is Brooklyn you're  
21 talking about?

22 MR. CHANG: Prospect, Brooklyn.

23 Thank you.

24 MS. MAYERS: I'm sorry. Your number  
25 is?

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MS. JACOBS: I think it's six.

MS. MAYERS: Could we have six straight through ten, if you could come over on this side; seven, eight, nine and ten.

MS. JACOBS: Hi. My name is Nisi Jacobs. Hi. How are you?

I wanted to -- there's three things I want to speak to. One is the -- we've been working very hard on social media to try to let people know that they have until the 25th to check out whether their affidavit was counted and if not, they have until the 25th, I understand, to contest it in court and they're being charged at least \$310 dollars to go into court and contest it just for the fee. That's what we've been told. We haven't gotten any straight information from the Board of Elections and we've also been hearing that people calling in to try to ascertain if their affidavit was counted are getting varying levels of assistance, and people who even know about the issue.

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2 MR. AVLON: Just a question for  
3 clarification. Who is that \$310 paid to,  
4 allegedly; the Board of Elections or --

5 MS. JACOBS: What we understand is  
6 that it's a fee -- it's a court fee. A  
7 court fee.

8 MR. AVLON: So a filing fee for the  
9 documentation?

10 MS. JACOBS: Right. So for all of  
11 the number of affidavits, there was only 98  
12 counted in Brooklyn is what we understand,  
13 and so the rest, the balance of who wasn't  
14 counted, Ryan said that last Friday at the  
15 City Hall -- City Council meeting. Only 98  
16 were found valid. So the other number of  
17 affidavits that were submitted and found  
18 invalid, those people have until the 25th  
19 to go into the Board of Ed or call them,  
20 except when they call, they're not usually  
21 finding anybody who knows what they're  
22 talking about. They're not being told a  
23 deadline, and he's already told Election  
24 Justice USA's lawyer and anybody else who  
25 he speaks to the matter about, he will

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2 admit that the notices that they're mailing  
3 out to people to let them know that they  
4 have until the 25th, won't reach them until  
5 after the 25th, if they're sent at all.

6 So you're talking about what I see  
7 as like, a way to make money for the  
8 courts. I don't understand this system at  
9 all. I know a lot of people who have gone  
10 in to have to file for a court issue and  
11 not even been fined. \$300 people don't  
12 have, that's very prohibitive, and it's  
13 prohibitive to have to go down there to  
14 talk to somebody who doesn't know. That's  
15 my first point.

16 My second point is I spoke to  
17 somebody who came all the way down here  
18 today from the Bronx, who is a poll worker,  
19 and who's also somebody who was forced for  
20 whatever reason to vote by absentee ballot,  
21 he's going to talk about to you about that,  
22 he had no idea as a trained poll worker  
23 whose got his own testimony about his poll  
24 place, that he had until the 25th. He said  
25 I don't know if my vote counted; how can I

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find out? So if he's not on social media because maybe that's not his thing, he has no way to learn this anywhere. It's not in the newspapers, it's not being passed around anywhere. What are we supposed to do? Go -- if he's not on Facebook or Twitter, are we supposed to walk around the City and go up to everybody and say, excuse me, do you have a question, you random person? So that's number two.

Number three is, I was walking my dogs in Sunset Park yesterday. I happened to pass by the office of City Council Member Carlos Menchaca. So I went in, such a nice office, beautifully laid out, organized, bright, helpful. Somebody comes to greet me, they know what they're doing. I ask them, did you have any voters that came in with any issues. He said yeah, about a dozen in the neighborhood; they vote across the street at the nursing home. They came in before voting day. They were so engaged, which is probably not the norm for that neighborhood because it's a rough



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2 neighborhood, it's not like people have a  
3 lot of leisure time to think about and plan  
4 these things out, they're usually working a  
5 lot of jobs. They came in, they wanted to  
6 find out why they couldn't find themselves  
7 on the voter registration online database.  
8 And he said -- I said to him, what did  
9 you tell them? He said well, we're not  
10 really allowed to speak to it.

11 So this is the person in the  
12 community, the community people that even  
13 know about the office, will go to for  
14 assistance. He works for this Council  
15 Member, Carlos Menchaca who I'm sure is  
16 great, and when I said what do you tell  
17 those people who don't know why they've not  
18 showing up? He said I tell them to go to  
19 the Board of Elections. I said do you know  
20 that the Board of Elections, that their  
21 City and the State voter registration  
22 databases are still not in sync? He said  
23 no, I didn't know that.

24 So that means that when I went  
25 online and I looked at all of the City

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2 Council member offices in all boroughs, and  
3 there's like what, 50 or 60 of them, I bet  
4 you when I call all of them, which is what  
5 I'm going to do, every single person who  
6 picks up the phone is going to say oh, I  
7 told them to call the Board of Elections.

8 And when I was at the Board of  
9 Elections last Tuesday I asked a question  
10 which was, is there a page on your website  
11 that tells me what your planned changes are  
12 because we know all the problems. We've  
13 been here for two weeks telling you hours  
14 and hours of testimony of problems. Do you  
15 have a page like these are our changes that  
16 are coming up. They shut me down.

17 Ms. Perez said to me, do you have a serious  
18 question; do you have a real question,  
19 Ms. Jacobs? She shut me down.

20 Everybody -- and I have it on tape. I have  
21 it on videotape. It's archived. It's  
22 online for you if you want to see it.  
23 They all laughed in my face. They sat  
24 around and laughed at me. They looked at  
25 each other like I was a complete moron for

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asking them if they had a customer service page that let me know about upcoming changes because I said we don't feel secure about our next election.

So I was told it's on the website, it's on the website, we don't have time for you. So I called the next day, I can't find it on the website. What's on the website? I can't find the page. Somebody will call you back. She started to read me the about page description of the Board of Elections. I said I know what the about page is. That's not the planned changes. I don't know what you're talking about, I'll have to call you back.

I talked to, finally, the woman who shuts everybody down at the meetings and 15 seconds, 30 seconds 45 seconds, 1 minute. You know that woman? She called me back and she told me they misunderstood me. They thought I meant the streaming video that was being documented during -- when I was asking them do they have a page with the statements telling us what changes are

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2 planned. I said why would I ask you for a  
3 page with a bulleted list of live video  
4 stream. That makes no sense. We  
5 misunderstood you, you probably weren't  
6 clear. So I got blamed again. I got  
7 laughed at, I got blamed, I got ridiculed  
8 and I got interrupted and told that my  
9 questions weren't real. So these are the  
10 people that are calling the Board of  
11 Elections.

12 MR. CHANG: I understand. Thank  
13 you. So we understand that they were very  
14 rude. So is there anything else that you  
15 would like to talk about?

16 MS. JACOBS: Well, yeah. What I  
17 would like to find out is, you have to find  
18 this weak link, this is an amazing weak  
19 link, and if you want to go to Albany and  
20 take all these grand ideas up there and  
21 have them put to the back of the list  
22 because that's what's going to happen, you  
23 have to actually think about all the weak  
24 links like city council members who don't  
25 know anything and don't tell their office

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2 members that people coming in from the  
3 community are being dumped over, you know,  
4 into the garbage when they actually need  
5 real help.

6 MR. CHANG: Thank you. Thank you  
7 very much.

8 MR. AVALON: We do hear your  
9 frustrations.

10 (Applause.)

11 MR. WEINBERGER: Okay. My name is  
12 Leo Weinberger. I want to thank you for  
13 having this. I want to thank you guys for  
14 having the trip to Albany a couple of weeks  
15 ago which I went on. I'd like to thank you  
16 for being on NY 1 and the Dominican fellow  
17 over there for being on NY1. I watched you  
18 both. A lot of what you had to say I  
19 believe in and you're going to hear a  
20 little bit about that now.

21 So, you made great points, you know,  
22 and this is not getting heard. We're  
23 losing our democracy. Okay. I think we  
24 don't -- I think the two major parties  
25 don't want us to vote. I'm new to this,

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2 okay, and when I read the legislations that  
3 we were up there in Albany about, the Voter  
4 Empowerment Act and the other two, I'm  
5 realizing oh my God, we're right at the  
6 beginning here. If we don't have ballots  
7 that we can read, if we have to register  
8 over a year in advance to an election and  
9 all that and if we, you know, the simple  
10 vanilla stuff we haven't gotten to yet, we  
11 have a lot of work to do. We have a lot of  
12 work to do.

13 So I show up. I'm an independent  
14 since 1992 because since then I basically  
15 thought both major parties are two sides of  
16 the same coin. Okay. I still get to vote  
17 for third-party candidates so I'm fine with  
18 that. I show up at P.S. 41,  
19 116 West 11th Street, and I say I'm an  
20 independent, Bernie Sanders is an  
21 independent, why can't I vote for him? My  
22 taxes go to funding this whole voting  
23 system that we have here. What's going on?  
24 A kind person said here, we can give you an  
25 affidavit ballot and I was stunned. An

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2 affidavit ballot, I never saw that before.  
3 Oh, yes. There's this federal lawsuit  
4 going on today and it's possible that your  
5 vote may count. That's what I was told,  
6 okay, as an independent on a democratic  
7 primary day, right, but I of course started  
8 to fill it out. And I realized this is  
9 very small type and I'm reading the  
10 instructions and I realize wait, about the  
11 sixth line down it says you have to vote  
12 for six delegates on this ballot. Tiny,  
13 tiny print and I'm imagining all these  
14 people in the room and, you know, of all  
15 ages, all backgrounds, how are they going  
16 to know that if they don't pick just six on  
17 there out of all the names on there, their  
18 whole ballot's invalid, if I'm not  
19 mistaken, right? Not true? I'm saying if  
20 you vote for more than six.

21 MS. UDDIN: You can't.

22 MR. WEINBERGER: But if you're doing  
23 an affidavit ballot you can.

24 Anyway, so I don't want to dwell on  
25 that. But, you know, the instructions with

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2 one of our bills here addresses that.

3 So then I go campaign for my  
4 candidate and I start telling people they  
5 accepted my ballot and all that, texting  
6 twittering all over the place because all  
7 these independents were one of the three  
8 million or 27 percent of the electorate in  
9 New York State that were blocked out of  
10 that primary. Okay. They started  
11 twittering and going crazy, you know, get  
12 your ballots in, there's still time today,  
13 go to your polling station anyway. Some  
14 got them in, some didn't get them in. Very  
15 inconsistent, by the way. You need to know  
16 all of this, you guys, right? Extremely  
17 inconsistent.

18 So I don't know whether mine will  
19 ever count. I think that lawsuit is still  
20 pending, they're still taking in discovery.

21 MS. GIBBS: No, they passed the  
22 lawsuit.

23 MR. WEINBERGER: Well, that  
24 day -- is it -- that day they did not get  
25 the TRO but --



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2 MS. GIBBS: The Supreme Court has  
3 ruled twice that closed primaries are  
4 permissible.

5 MR. AVLON: I think there are  
6 additional challenges being made and I am a  
7 fellow independent and I agree with you  
8 that the taxpayer funding of a closed  
9 partisan primary is highly questionable  
10 because it's exclusive rather than  
11 inclusive, so I agree with you.

12 MR. WEINBERGER: I paid for this  
13 microphone, do you know what I mean? Let's  
14 keep it simple.

15 MR. CHANG: Do you have anything  
16 else because your time -- your time --

17 MR. WEINBERGER: Oh, I'm sorry. I'm  
18 going on and on.

19 Quickly, in Albany we had the press  
20 conference. Six democrats showed up to our  
21 press conference. Where were the other  
22 democrats? I was the only person that  
23 asked a question, if you remember. There  
24 were lots of press there and I asked a  
25 simple question, what other democrats are

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2 not cosponsoring or supporting these bills?  
3 I heard silence from the six of them. Then  
4 I pulled my state -- the only  
5 representative I had there, Mr. Hoilman.  
6 Privately he wouldn't tell me either.

7 Apparently you have new cosponsors  
8 now since that day, right?

9 MR. CHANG: Yes.

10 MR. WEIMBERGER: You said there are.  
11 I'd like to see that list eventually.

12 Maybe my Assembly Person Deborah Glick --

13 MR. CHANG: If you ask a person in  
14 the back and he will give you the list.

15 MR. RYAN: You can also go to the  
16 legislative websites and type in the bill  
17 number and it will tell you who the  
18 sponsors are of the legislation.

19 MR. WEINBERGER: Right. Okay.  
20 Well, I know -- okay.

21 MR. CHANG: Do you have anything  
22 else?

23 MR. WEINBERGER: I know you've got a  
24 lot of people.

25 MR. CHANG: I'd like to move. I'd

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2 like to give everybody else an opportunity.

3 MR. WEINBERGER: Just my experience.  
4 My experience that day, we were assigned to  
5 three public officials; the democrat wasn't  
6 there, the republican had his chief of  
7 staff there who didn't know anything about  
8 the legislation at all -- pled as though he  
9 didn't know anything about the legislation,  
10 and the only person I actually got to speak  
11 to is Jack Martins from Nassau County who  
12 said that shortening the time period, which  
13 is really my primarily reason for being  
14 here, let's shorten that from over a year  
15 to the ten days which the Voter Empowerment  
16 Act -- I mean, that has -- something close  
17 to that has to happen other else we're --  
18 this is a joke, you know, as I started out  
19 by saying.

20 So -- but my experience that day  
21 being assigned to three officials was  
22 ridiculous also. They weren't interested  
23 at all in what we were there for. They  
24 knew well in advance we were going to show  
25 up yet we got virtually nothing in the way

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2 of a response from them, and it was the  
3 democrat who didn't even show up from  
4 Southeast Queens.

5 I know we can't go on, but thank  
6 you.

7 (Applause.)

8 MR. CHANG: Thank you very much. I  
9 appreciate your efforts on this.

10 It's no surprise that we are, you  
11 know, 46 to 49th out of 50 states every  
12 election season in participation. It's no  
13 surprise.

14 MR. AVLON: And you're right to say  
15 that some elected officials don't feel they  
16 have an interest in high voter turnout.

17 MR. CHANG: In either party.

18 Great. Thank you.

19 MR. BERG: Hi, everyone. Thank you  
20 to the Campaign Finance Board and Voter  
21 Assistance Advisory Committee for holding  
22 this important hearing. We'll take the  
23 opportunity to comment on the '15/'16 --

24 MR. CHANG: Could you introduce  
25 yourselves, please?

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2 MR. BERG: -- annual study and case  
3 study.

4 So my name is Jarret Berg. I'm the  
5 Executive Director of the Democratic  
6 Lawyers Council here in New York. For over  
7 ten years, we've protected the rights of  
8 voters by deploying trained election  
9 monitors and advocates in poll sites on  
10 election day. We use this frontline  
11 experience to advocate for pro voter  
12 legislative reforms that would modernize  
13 the registration administration systems  
14 and alleviate common problems that arise  
15 every cycle.

16 MS. ROBINS: And my name is  
17 Elizabeth Robins. I'm President of the  
18 Cardozo Law School Democrats. As I will  
19 discuss in my testimony, in addition to  
20 organizing several nonpartisan voter  
21 registration drives with New York City  
22 Votes over the past two years, I also  
23 worked at the Board of Elections through  
24 college, have been a poll watcher and  
25 voting rights advocate for many election

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2 cycles. Today we will share our  
3 observations and offer solutions to  
4 problems that arise on and before and after  
5 election day.

6 Earlier this year, I held  
7 nonpartisan voter registration drives at  
8 Cardozo Law School on March 16 and  
9 March 23. On March 16, I contacted the  
10 Campaign Finance Board office. I arrived  
11 there and I picked up voter registration  
12 forms and materials for the drive.

13 MR. CHANG: Ms. Robins, are you  
14 going to read your whole testimony? Is  
15 that your intent? I wish you could limit  
16 your testimony to two minutes, please.

17 MS. ROBINS: Okay. Sure.

18 So I was notified that if I dropped  
19 off completed forms for both drives, New  
20 York City Votes would make sure all the  
21 forms would be submitted to the Board of  
22 Elections by the deadline, and so that's  
23 what I did. However, a week before the  
24 April 19th primary, I started to receive  
25 frantic e-mails from students that had

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2 registered at my drive. They hadn't  
3 received any confirmation that they were  
4 registered, and when they called their  
5 borough offices, they were notified that  
6 they were not registered and that there was  
7 nothing they can do about it because the  
8 deadline passed.

9 To this date, I am aware that at  
10 least 1/3 of the people who completed voter  
11 registration forms at my drive were never  
12 registered. To this day, they remain  
13 unregistered and they checked online, they  
14 were not part of the database. I'm aware  
15 of one person from my drive who registered  
16 successfully after mailing their  
17 application on their own.

18 So I'm deeply disappointed because  
19 people thanked me for making it more  
20 convenient to register at school so I was  
21 crushed when my peers told me they were  
22 never registered. And regardless of why,  
23 you know, some registrations were processed  
24 and some weren't, I believe it's clear that  
25 our voter registration system lacks the

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meaningful accountability of a basic tracking system. To the extent that the government requires people to register before voting, I believe it's the government's responsibility to make sure that the registrations systems are straightforward, convenient and reliable.

And currently, there's no way to track the status of a pending voter registration form that originates for a voter registration drive. Once a form is mailed or submitted, how do we know it's actually received by the Board of Elections?

As part of the election modernization, further, New York needs an online voter registration system for all voters, not just those who in tracked with the DMV. This is especially important for students who may not have a license with the New York State DMV but are still eligible to register. This can drastically improve our registration system. It would eliminate the mountains of paper that the



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2 BOE must process, would reduce the  
3 transcription errors since I'm aware that  
4 employees need to look at the paper forms  
5 and transcribe them into a computer, and  
6 that's an easy way for errors to happen,  
7 and it would provide accountability that  
8 would better protect people's civil rights.

9 And one of the biggest complaints I  
10 received from students is that they were  
11 stuck waiting for confirmation until it was  
12 too late. So given that the current voter  
13 registration deadline is more than three  
14 weeks before the date, by the time we  
15 realized they were never registered,  
16 there's no recourse, there's no way to  
17 prove that they met the deadline and should  
18 have been registered. So basically, in  
19 this day and age, it's unacceptable to have  
20 a paper-based system that doesn't have  
21 accountability.

22 MR. CHANG: Ms. Jarret [sic] -- I'm  
23 going to have to monitor your time.

24 Ms. Robins, do you have copies of  
25 your testimony? Do you have it available

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2 for the audience here in case they would  
3 like to see it?

4 MR. BERG: We have the ten we gave  
5 you and we can followup by e-mail.

6 MR. CHANG: It will go up on the  
7 website.

8 Thank you for your testimony.  
9 Almost everything that you've had in your  
10 testimony is actually in the Vote Better NY  
11 initiatives.

12 MS. ROBINS: I believe we have  
13 additional policy proposals if you wanted  
14 to see.

15 MR. BERG: If the Chair would hear  
16 it, we can be quick.

17 MR. CHANG: I think your time is up.  
18 I want to give respect to the rest of the  
19 other folks who want to testify.

20 MS. ROBINS: Well, thank you very  
21 much. We appreciate it.

22 MR. CHANG: Thank you.

23 (Applause.)

24 MS. BERG: Hi. My name is  
25 Phoebe Berg. I volunteered organizing

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voter registration drives in February and March and I was very excited about the primary and have been reading a lot about it after I attended a Board of Elections meeting a couple of Tuesdays ago, witnessed people at the Board of Elections wanting to look into individual people's problems, not -- and kind of wanting to place blame on those people; oh, you didn't fill out the form correctly, oh this or that or this, and this is really a systemwide problem and these individual people are examples of a massive voter suppression, it sounds like.

So from what I understand, and these numbers may not be correct because it's impossible to get the correct information, every article seems to be a little bit different, 126,000 people were thrown off the voter rolls in Brooklyn alone from what the Board of Elections was quoted saying; over a hundred thousand people's party affiliations were changed from democrat to independent or no party, which meant they

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could no longer vote; and then a a hundred thousand affidavit ballots were cast and like 80 or 90,000 of them were thrown out. Only about 40 -- 30 or 40,000 were counted which didn't change the results of the election.

That's -- and then on top of that, the Board of Elections, their gross incompetence, underfunding, I don't know what the problem is, but they sent out a mailing to new voters saying that the primary was in September. I called the Board of Elections to find out the deadline for new voters to be able to vote in the primary. They said it was March 15th that a new voter had to vote -- register in order to vote in the primary. That is incorrect. I called again and they gave me a different date.

These kinds of things, it's -- the problem is we have no idea how many people actually were not able to vote because of gross incompetence and wrong information from the Board of Elections, because of

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2 people getting thrown off the voting rolls,  
3 because of people's party changing  
4 mysteriously, and so I think that we really  
5 need to have another primary election, just  
6 have it all over again, because --

7 (Applause.)

8 MS. BERG: -- this is -- these -- I  
9 think it's great that there are things, you  
10 know, you have initiatives or whatever it  
11 is that you want to put forth to fix these  
12 problems, but it needs to be fixed now.  
13 And the thing is, is this primary election,  
14 these -- the 300,000 people possibly or  
15 more that were not allowed to vote,  
16 Hillary Clinton won by 290,000. This could  
17 have changed the outcome of our primary,  
18 meaning it will change the outcome of our  
19 election in November, meaning we can have a  
20 Trump president and that will be because of  
21 the primary here in New York State.

22 So another thing I would like  
23 to -- I was told by someone, this was off  
24 the record so they couldn't give any names  
25 and I know you guys want to have specifics

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2 to be able to go into this but I don't know  
3 -- I can't do that, I was told that someone  
4 from a campaign talked to someone at the  
5 DMV about online voter registrations, that  
6 I guess apparently on the DMV website you  
7 can register to vote while you're -- I  
8 don't know exactly --

9 MS. AVLON: Smarter voter.

10 MS. BERG: Yes, exactly. They were  
11 told that those online voter registrations  
12 were not going to be submitted to the Board  
13 of Elections in time to meet the March 25th  
14 deadline.

15 So anyway, that's all I have to say.  
16 I call -- I think that all these -- this  
17 problem has been going on for a really long  
18 time and if it -- and I don't know how  
19 these initiatives that you are proposing  
20 are going to really make much of a  
21 difference. I mean going forward,  
22 possibly, but it's not going to change the  
23 election that's happening now and it's --  
24 our world is at stake. So, thank you.

25 MR. CHANG: Great. Thank you.

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(Applause.)

MR. DAVIS: Hello. First and foremost, thank you for the work that everyone here is doing, trying to make this -- trying to improve this system.

My name is Geoffrey Davis. I'm the District Leader of the 43rd Assembly District. The overwhelming response from the constituents in the 43rd is that this particular race, the last one, was corrupt. That overwhelming response, it was corrupt, corrupt, corrupt. If we can send something out, perhaps, and I know that you did. I've seen a lot of things here that you're already trying to explain, you know, the purging because people are very concerned with the purging. People who were registered to vote for the last 30 or 40 years are no longer registered to vote. If you can educate them on why, if you missed two special -- if you missed two federal elections, try to educate them a little bit more, make it more sensitive to where you're not talking over their head. If

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2 they missed certain races that they're  
3 purged, they're pulled when they're  
4 thinking that were elected -- I mean, they  
5 were registered to vote for many, many  
6 years.

7 The font size, you already put that  
8 in here for our seniors and that was very  
9 good. As I was thinking of my ideas, I'm  
10 like this font size, already taken care of.  
11 And my -- Sue Yellin, a constituent of mine  
12 in Prospect Lefferts Gardens mentioned that  
13 there's the Creoles, a large population and  
14 if we can tend to that, that's very  
15 important.

16 Now, the poll sites at P.S. 92, in  
17 Parkside and Bedford, there's a lot of  
18 machines there. Let's say there's 10,  
19 15 -- how many machines are there, Sue, at  
20 your poll site? And my point is at another  
21 poll site, there's only one or two.

22 MS. YELLIN: 30  
23 machines -- (inaudible).

24 MR. DAVIS: Right. So  
25 there's -- right, and separate tables. So



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2 some poll sites have a large number of  
3 machines and some don't, so if we can make  
4 that a little bit more convenient for the  
5 larger buildings to have machines in their  
6 buildings when they get off the elevator,  
7 that would be good too, to make it more  
8 convenient for our seniors.

9 MR. KHAN: Accessibility issues.

10 MR. DAVIS: Accessibility.

11 Accessibility issues, yes, because they got  
12 to walk or go ten blocks down when they can  
13 put one right downstairs. That used to be  
14 years ago where they can go right  
15 downstairs and vote and go right back  
16 upstairs. So accessibility is very, very  
17 important and very good.

18 Again, a message of not just through  
19 social media about the education aspect of  
20 what happened April 19th, and a message of  
21 explaining that purging and how you can be  
22 removed, an education factor through the  
23 mail, a lot of people -- or whatever way  
24 you get it out, but through mail because  
25 our seniors aren't necessarily on social

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2 media, on what happened, how you can be  
3 removed when they take pride in voting for  
4 the last 30, 40 or 50 years and they're no  
5 longer able to vote. And again --

6 MR. CHANG: Thank you.

7 MR. DAVIS: Thank you. A lot of  
8 this is here. Thank you.

9 MR. CHANG: Thank you so much.

10 (Applause.)

11 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Hello. Can you hear  
12 me?

13 MS. MAYERS: Yes.

14 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Hi. My name is  
15 Jessie Rodriguez and I'm a senior at Hunter  
16 College. About a month prior to the New  
17 York primary, a group of volunteers and I  
18 did a voter registration drive and  
19 successfully registered about 1,200  
20 students during the course of four weeks.  
21 Most of those students were first time  
22 voters and they were very excited to  
23 participate in the political process and  
24 have their voices heard. I myself am a  
25 first time voter as well.

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On primary day, I was doing -- get out the effort to vote at my school and I had about 50 students coming to me to tell me that they couldn't vote because either the registration wasn't on the books or they showed up as a nonparty affiliated or green party affiliated, or they were given wrong polling locations. It went as far as one student telling me that he was told by the poll worker that he should vote for Hillary Clinton because she was going to win anyway. I told him to report this to the Board of Elections.

This is on top of the independence or green party affiliations that were not in time to change it back in October, which, I mean I don't know even what I'm going to have for dinner tonight nonetheless what I'm going to do six months from now. So that's a problem as well.

These students took the time out of their day and made the effort to cast their vote and exercise their right as citizens just to be turned away at the polls. It

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2 was frustrating for me but I'm sure it was  
3 even more frustrating for them. I told  
4 about affidavit ballots and encouraged them  
5 to go back and vote and not leave -- I told  
6 them do not leave the poll until you cast  
7 your vote, know your rights. Well, we just  
8 found out that a lot of those affidavit  
9 ballots were not counted, so that's  
10 disappointing as well.

11 I am disappointed and disencouraged  
12 about the democratic system in this country  
13 and I'm sure I'm not alone. As a young  
14 voter, I can tell you that if nothing gets  
15 done about the issues that we're discussing  
16 today, there will be many people that will  
17 feel disenfranchised and lose hope in the  
18 political process altogether, just like I  
19 have. Thank you.

20 MR. CHANG: Thank you.

21 (Applause.)

22 MR. CROWN: My name is Elliot Crown.  
23 This election is being stolen. How do I  
24 know? The exit polling data tells the  
25 story. The Bush administration declared

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2 the 2004 Ukrainian election fraudulent.  
3 How did they know? Exit polling data did  
4 not match the official tally.

5 Since 2003, Edison Research has  
6 provided U.S. exit polling data to CNN,  
7 Fox, ABC, all the major media. They  
8 carefully examined thousands of votes  
9 across the country with scientific methods  
10 correcting for early voting, affidavit  
11 voting, age, race, etc. But in the U.S.,  
12 this fool proof data ends up in the trash.  
13 We have to trust what three voting  
14 companies tell us about who won, who lost.  
15 We can't see how they do the tally because  
16 their software is privately owned,  
17 proprietary.

18 In caucus states where voting  
19 results are transparent, Sanders won. In  
20 paper ballot districts in Massachusetts,  
21 Sanders won, but in 20 of 23 states using  
22 unaccountable voting software, there has  
23 been an impossible shift toward  
24 Hillary Clinton; 11.8 percent in New York  
25 State, 14 percent in Alabama. A shift of

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2 two percent or more is fraud.

3 An interesting side note, on the  
4 republican nomination side, the exit  
5 polling is perfectly matching Edison's  
6 Research. Imagine, perfectly. The odds  
7 that what we are seeing on the democratic  
8 side as a random occurrence are over 10  
9 million to 1. Thank you.

10 (Applause.)

11 MR. AVLON: Sir, I think you may  
12 find, just point of information, that most  
13 of the primaries use entrance polls rather  
14 than exit polls which are generally  
15 reserved for general elections. So that's  
16 something you may want to factor in.

17 MR. CROWN: Exit polling data is not  
18 used in Arkansas but they send thousands of  
19 people out. Edison Research and the exit  
20 polling data in this election is used to  
21 make early forecasts by all the major  
22 media.

23 MR. AVLON: No. Entrance polling is  
24 what's usually used in primaries, not exit  
25 polls.

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2 MR. CROWN: You're mistaken.

3 MR. AVLON: I'm usually the  
4 recipient of many of them so -- but anyway.

5 MR. CROWN: Richard Charnin is the  
6 expert on this.

7 MS. BARRI: Hi. I'm Lisa Barri.  
8 There is massive fraud going on, massive  
9 secrecy, and a disregard for the law, and  
10 the reason I know this is because I was an  
11 affidavit -- at the affidavit count to  
12 observe. I was sent by a delegate. I was  
13 certified.

14 I'm going to ask that the Board of  
15 Elections, as with all people in  
16 government, be held to the same laws that  
17 you all are asking every citizen of this  
18 country to adhere to. The law for  
19 observing -- (lost signal).

20 The Board of Elections in New York  
21 City knew this because I saw a letter from  
22 them to both campaigns about this citing  
23 the law I just mentioned and further, the  
24 Law 8-500 that also talks about an observer  
25 being allowed in completely, particularly

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2 if you're certified and a representative  
3 sent you, a delegate in my case.

4 Not only that, according to these  
5 laws, I had the right to object to any  
6 disregard or -- any vote being thrown out,  
7 I could have objected to, 1 or 100,000. I  
8 had that right. This is not what happened.  
9 What happened was rather a nightmare. I  
10 was forbidden to stand, I was forbidden to  
11 sit any closer than two feet from any work  
12 station. Everything in their power that  
13 they can do, the bottom line is they wanted  
14 me to see nothing. I was told this was the  
15 law. That was a lie. This is government  
16 lying about the law. And I can just tell  
17 you in my experience, I've had lawyers who  
18 take vows of votes to uphold the law lie  
19 about laws to me affecting my life. It's  
20 not okay. It's not okay.

21 It got so bad that, although it was  
22 a small room, we're talking about the  
23 Varick Street office, a small room, nothing  
24 was roped off, everything looked the same,  
25 but I wouldn't adhere to what they were



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2 asking me to do unless they could show me  
3 the law because I knew my rights. They  
4 said they would, they never showed me the  
5 law because there was no law of what they  
6 were saying.

7 At one point I was on one part of  
8 the room, I never told not to be there, I  
9 was threatened twice by the clerk. The  
10 security guard was summoned. I mean, do I  
11 look threatening? The security guard  
12 actually held his arms out when I tried to  
13 go past him and said you're not going  
14 anywhere. What?

15 Also, some observations in the room,  
16 I saw piles of ballots rubber band with  
17 notes on them that they weren't read by the  
18 machine and they were like thrown in a  
19 corner. What?

20 I heard one person working on the  
21 ballots ask his supervisor -- I didn't hear  
22 the whole thing but I heard, how are we to  
23 do it when we have to change the numbers?  
24 This was a guy with a ballot, with ballots.  
25 What? And somebody's going to tell me

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2 there isn't fraud going on.

3 Probably the most important thing  
4 was I was told early on by the head clerk  
5 that only 1/3 of all the affidavit ballots  
6 were being counted. I said why? He said  
7 they're the only ones verified. I said how  
8 do you -- tell me the process of how you're  
9 verifying. Silence, wouldn't tell me.

10 On top of that, there was a whole  
11 room that this was going on in. The  
12 observers call it the purging room and it  
13 was going on in every single location in  
14 every borough, and none of us, we were  
15 forbidden entry into this room. The law  
16 says I can go in there and the law says  
17 that I could have said no, I object to you  
18 throwing this ballot out, there's no basis  
19 for it. So much secrecy. So much secrecy  
20 a security guard had to come up and the  
21 next day when I went, I was literally  
22 blacklisted. They tried to prevent me from  
23 going in at all.

24 What got me in the first day, my  
25 certificate; wouldn't get me in the second

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day. Then I was told I had to have something else which I didn't have at the time, but I got on the phone, I made a call, I ran downstairs, I went to a, you know, print place. It took me over an hour to do this while they were doing something that they didn't want me to see in the room they kept me out. Because of me on the second day, the room was roped off with a security guard present, even though I was told with the original certificate that let me in the first day I can't come in because the date, something, something, whatever, and I need this other thing, but if I want, I can stay in the public area, which is behind this new rope, but as a delegate -- a delegate representative I can go further with the other thing. When I got the other thing, I still wasn't allowed through. I still wasn't allowed through, and in between that, another gentleman came out when I got the second certificate and he said oh, that's a problem too because you're delegate only represents this

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2 territory and we've already done the -- I  
3 said no, that's not the law.

4 Everything was a lie, a  
5 misrepresentation of the law. And I'm not  
6 just telling you this story because, you  
7 know, I got horrible treatment, which I did  
8 and it needs to be noted, but this is like  
9 a metaphor for what's going on, not only in  
10 the City. I spoke to face-to-face with the  
11 lawyers whose got the lawsuit going on  
12 about this primary and this voter  
13 suppression going on massively. It's bad  
14 in the City, but what you don't hear is  
15 that it's equally bad in the entire State  
16 of New York. Albany has had massive voter  
17 suppression and I think, I don't know if  
18 this is exact, but I think he said three  
19 million people in the state. I'm not  
20 talking independence now. I'm talking  
21 about longtime democrats, lifetime  
22 democrats who all of a sudden their party  
23 was changed, they were taken off. Three  
24 million longtime, lifetime committed  
25 democrats.

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2 I'm going to tell you -- I'm going  
3 to leave you with one -- two things.  
4 Number one, following other states, New  
5 York has got to decertify this primary and  
6 must take a revote.

7 (Applause.)

8 MS. BARRI: Thank you so much for  
9 your time.

10 MS. MAYERS: We're at 14. Can we  
11 have 15 through 20 come up, please?

12 MS. KHAN: Good evening. I just  
13 wanted to know -- I recently learned about  
14 the Advisory Committee. I'm number 16 by  
15 the way. I don't know if there's anyone  
16 else that was --

17 MR. CHANG: What's your name? Just  
18 what's your name just because --

19 MR. KHAN: Tiffany Khan. She didn't  
20 have her ticket so I wasn't sure who would  
21 be next.

22 MR. CHANG: We just want to know  
23 what your name is.

24 MS. KHAN: So as to not further  
25 waste time --

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2 MR. CHANG: Your name and your  
3 affiliation, if any?

4 MS. KHAN: I'm sorry. Tiffany Khan.  
5 No, none.

6 I only recently learned about the  
7 Advisory Committee and I wanted to know  
8 what efforts you have been making to market  
9 or advertise this meeting tonight to the  
10 public because I have spoken with every  
11 single one of the 60 families that live in  
12 my building and no one has ever heard of  
13 this, nor were they even aware of this  
14 meeting, and it's shameful. I have -- I  
15 know of people who would have loved to have  
16 attended and also given their testimonies  
17 but they were not able to do so, so ..

18 MR. CHANG: I think that's a  
19 fantastic point. What could we do to make  
20 it more widely known being the normal  
21 vehicles of press doesn't really cover  
22 this, the -- you know, we don't have a  
23 budget to advertise this, we don't have a  
24 budget to send mailings, we don't have  
25 people's e-mail addresses. So we have, you

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2 know, a website for the Campaign Finance  
3 Board, but really, I mean --

4 MR. AVLON: And social medial.

5 MR. CHANG: -- and social media. So  
6 we do as much as we can can on social media  
7 but it's a great point. How would you  
8 think that we could actually reach more  
9 people?

10 MS. KHAN: Well, besides social  
11 media which only really certain people are  
12 able to access, a lot of the families in my  
13 building are senior citizens, they don't  
14 use social media at all, again, it would be  
15 through standard mailing but you're saying  
16 that you don't have a budget for it. So I  
17 don't -- I don't really see -- first of  
18 all, why don't you have -- why are you  
19 unable to do that? It's something -- it's  
20 not -- it's not that expensive to send out  
21 a 48-cent stamp mailing.

22 MR. CHANG: (inaudible)

23 MS. GIBBS: Maybe you should raise  
24 this with the appropriate members,  
25 appropriate representatives but it is a

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2 budgetary issue. They don't fully fund the  
3 Committee.

4 MS. KHAN: Will there be future  
5 efforts made? I'm happy to help if  
6 that's -- if it's possible.

7 MS. GIBBS: I'm sure there will be  
8 future efforts made.

9 MS. KHAN: Because it seems to me  
10 that the 26th of this month is the deadline  
11 for people to contact the Board of  
12 Elections and it's a very short period of  
13 time for them to do so.

14 MR. CHANG: It is a great point. If  
15 you want to get -- do something, I would  
16 say, you know, get involved with your  
17 Council Member, raise those issues with  
18 your Council Member.

19 MS. KHAN: I've contacted my City  
20 Council Member. I've also written  
21 Gale Brewer as well as -- well, yes.

22 MR. CHANG: Perfect. If all 60  
23 apartments in your building would do the  
24 same thing, that would be -- have a pretty  
25 big impact on your Council Member.



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2 MS. KHAN: It almost feels as if  
3 pass everyone's passing the baton to  
4 someone else but no one's really taking  
5 responsibility.

6 (Applause.)

7 MS. GIBBS: Seriously, I mean it is  
8 a budgetary issue. There are a lot of  
9 things that can and should be done. For  
10 example, if I -- well, I don't have any  
11 power or any money, but really,  
12 announcements should be made on subways and  
13 in places that are regularly visited by  
14 people; subways, buses and things of that  
15 nature, but to that, I mean, a campaign has  
16 to be embarked upon before they do that.

17 MS. MAYERS: I have a question. How  
18 did you find out about the meeting?

19 MS. KHAN: A friend of mine sent me  
20 an e-mail. I consider myself to be pretty  
21 informed about events that are going on and  
22 I had no idea that this was taking place.  
23 It seems very under the radar.

24 MS. MAYERS: So it was word of  
25 mouth. I mean, I will say that the agency

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2 does do direct mailings but the direct  
3 mailings that this agency does is before  
4 the elections with voter guides, the  
5 printed voter guides during the municipal  
6 elections or from municipal elections. So  
7 in that case, we have a budget for that and  
8 we make sure that that printed piece goes  
9 into every registered voters home. Do you  
10 receive those?

11 MS. KHAN: I receive a lot of  
12 mailings primarily from my State Assemblyman,  
13 my City Council Member as well. I have  
14 never received anything from your office.

15 MS. MAYERS: Well, then we should  
16 check that before you leave, what your  
17 address is, because if you are a registered  
18 voter, you --

19 MS. KHAN: Hamilton Heights, yes.

20 MS. MAYERS: So then we'll check  
21 that before you leave and we'll make sure  
22 that you are on the correct list to get  
23 that.

24 MS. KHAN: Okay.

25 MS. MAYERS: And I think we'll work

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2 toward getting more and more people. Every  
3 time we register someone to vote, we ask  
4 them for their e-mail. We ask them, you  
5 know, if we can use their address so this  
6 way we do send out mailings, not  
7 necessarily for this meeting, but we do  
8 send out pertinent information that you  
9 should know about your upcoming election.  
10 So a lot of that, and we try to communicate  
11 with everyone who we touch.

12 So right now and for June 28th, for  
13 the congressional primary, we are doing a  
14 get out the vote effort where we're calling  
15 everyone we've ever touched. You know, we  
16 try. We try -- so we do have vehicles  
17 around that so we can share more with you  
18 after also, but we're always looking for  
19 volunteers. We are looking for people who  
20 can come here the weekend of that 26th to  
21 make some of those phone calls with us, so  
22 there's ways that you can engage to help  
23 us, also to make sure that New Yorkers know  
24 about the work that we're trying to do.

25 MS. KHAN: Ok.

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MS. LOPREST: And just to, and I'm sorry I stepped out to use the restroom, sorry, to get that to -- I know that you had a question about notifications. There is one of the bills pending for the City Council would be to create a database of voters' e-mail and a text number so that there could be e-mail and text alerts to voters, and that information is being voluntarily collected on voter registration forms as new people are enrolled. But this would be to create a big database so that whenever there was information that needed to be sent to people could be not only put on the website or mailed, which, you know, the mail is not always a hundred percent reliable even, you know, even the people that don't have access to electronic message but to actually call people, e-mail them or text them and so that they would get these alerts about important dates that were coming up.

MR. CHANG: I think you're making some fantastic points so thank you so much

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2 for that. It's not just the a level of  
3 outreach but it's also the granularity of  
4 outreach, you know, that if actually  
5 there's a period to protest your -- find  
6 out whether your affidavit ballot was  
7 counted and protest, there's a deadline for  
8 that, that there's actually -- what that  
9 process actually looks like.

10 So I think there's a lot of  
11 specificity around the points that I think  
12 many people here have made that are very,  
13 very good. So thank you so much for those.

14 Just a quick poll for the folks who  
15 came here, how many people found out about  
16 this through word of mouth?

17 (Hands are raised.)

18 MR. CHANG: Through e-mail?

19 (Hands are raised.)

20 MR. CHANG: Social media?

21 (Hands are raised.)

22 MR. CHANG: So that's good. So we had  
23 about -- we did paid sponsored ads on Facebook.  
24 We had about 50,000 impressions and about 400  
25 were actually clicked on and shared.

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MS. LOPREST: And just to add here two things about notification. One of the things that Onida and her group has done, we do a lot of work. There's a local City law that requires various City agencies to be engaged in this kind of activity and many of those City agencies put our -- these spotlights which are on their websites. So it, you know, it might not be a website that has nothing to do at all with voting, you know, HRA or Department of Consumer Affairs, you know, and someone goes on there and then there will be a spotlight that have these more granular dates on them that you couldn't do a mass mailing to everyone in the whole city but you can communicate some of these more fine dates through these e-mail blasts.

Also, I mean, as Chair Chang said, it's, you know, one, it's important to tell people about these important dates. Also it's important to make sure that the communications are clear, and if you read the case study that's in our annual report,

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2 one of the things we bring up is that some  
3 of the messaging about people who got  
4 notifications even if you got in the mail  
5 the notification that you were going to be  
6 purged from the voter rolls, it was not  
7 particularly clear exactly that that was  
8 what was happening or that that -- what  
9 exactly you had to do about it. So it's  
10 important to work to make sure all the  
11 messaging is very, very clear because even  
12 if you got it, you want to make sure that  
13 people understand it and know exactly what  
14 the steps are that they have to take to fix  
15 their problem.

16 MS. KHAN: So that actually brings  
17 me to another point which is about people  
18 being purged from the rosters. And we've  
19 all heard of this, but just to sort of  
20 drive that point home one more time. I  
21 know of people personally who are  
22 registered democrats who have been voting  
23 in every election. There is absolutely no  
24 reason why they should not have been able  
25 to have voted on April 19th, and I wanted

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2 to also hear about what your Committee is  
3 planning on doing about that.

4 And just one last thing, you know,  
5 irrespective of your positions on the  
6 Committee, you should be concerned as  
7 American citizens because this is an  
8 outrage. It's an erosion of the democratic  
9 system and it's unacceptable. If this were  
10 to make place in a developing country, you  
11 would have news coverage of it, it would be  
12 ridiculed and we're accepting it. It is  
13 unacceptable. Thank you.

14 (Applause.)

15 MR. CHANG: Thank you.

16 MS. STEELE: Hello. Good evening.  
17 My name is Pearl Steel. I'm from Brooklyn,  
18 the 43rd District. I would like to add to  
19 what she said, word of mouth. I had to go  
20 to the website to find out the pertinence  
21 to attend the meeting. Here I am.

22 As a poll worker on that day, the  
23 looks on the people's faces that had to  
24 fill out the ballots was not very  
25 encouraging at all. A couple of people had



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2 their parties switched, of course they left  
3 in disgust, and we couldn't tell them were  
4 they were filling out ballots, which to me,  
5 took a lot more time than -- I'm sorry, the  
6 affidavits. Instead of filling out the  
7 ballots, they were filling out affidavits  
8 which took a lot more time than the ballots  
9 did.

10 My second issue on that day is I am  
11 in the 43rd, but yet I was slated to work  
12 in a different district. Is there a way  
13 that people who live in a particular  
14 district stay in that district to work as a  
15 poll worker?

16 MS. MAYERS: The Board of Election,  
17 in order to manage the whole city, they put  
18 you where they need you.

19 MS. STEELE: Have vacancy.

20 MS. MAYERS: No, where they need  
21 help. And if they can make the match  
22 closer to where you live, then sometimes  
23 they are able to accommodate that.

24 MS. STEELE: Okay. The funny thing  
25 is, my district leader Geoffrey who was

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2 here earlier, was able to switch me into my  
3 district so I worked in my district anyway.  
4 Other than that, I would have been  
5 traveling halfway through Brooklyn at 4:00  
6 in the morning. Well, not even 4:00, 3:00  
7 because it's very far from where I live.  
8 So that's something that maybe somebody can  
9 look at. Thank you.

10 MS. MAYERS: Thank you.

11 (Applause.)

12 MS. FINCH: I'm going to pass around  
13 a handout. I'm a long time -- my name is  
14 Diana Finch and I'm a long time New York  
15 voter and poll worker, and I'm here to talk  
16 about the inadequacies of the voter  
17 registration form and specifically, the  
18 political party enrollment section.

19 Confusing semantics and unclear  
20 instructions can be barriers to voting,  
21 just as much as onerous voter ID practices,  
22 and barriers to voting are illegal under  
23 state and federal law. New York State is  
24 among just 11 states that have closed  
25 primaries in which voters not enrolled in a

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party cannot participate. The New York State voter registration form is both confusing and misleading about party enrollment requirements and needs to be amended immediately so that it is not an obstacle to voting.

The section of concern on the form is 14, political party. The choice of not enrolling in a party should not be included as the last selection in a long list of parties under the heading political party. Voters can easily skip this section of the form altogether because they just read the heading which dismiss -- and dismiss it because they don't want to enroll in a party. While it does say under the heading that you must makes one selection, this could easily be interpreted to mean that you can enroll in only one party, not that you must make a selection. There should be a separate section on the form that is solely for declining enrollment in a political party. This separate section should include a clear warning that in New

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2 York State, declining enrollment in a  
3 political party means that the unenrolled  
4 voter cannot vote in primaries, even if  
5 they always vote for one party in general  
6 elections. So many New York voters vote  
7 only in general elections and they believe  
8 that I always vote democratic means that  
9 they are a democrat and are in the  
10 democratic party.

11 Finally, because the term  
12 independent voter is widely used by  
13 authoritative media sources, elected  
14 officials, and many others to mean voter  
15 not enrolled in a political party, the very  
16 confusing note about the connection between  
17 the independence party and the ability of  
18 nonenrolled voters to vote in certain  
19 primaries should not appear as a major  
20 instruction under the political party  
21 heading. It needs to be crystal clear and  
22 carefully placed elsewhere on the  
23 registration form. Thank you for your  
24 attention to this.

25 MR. CHANG: Thank you so much.

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2 (Applause.)

3 MR. AVLON: I want to say I really  
4 do appreciate your comments and I share  
5 many of your concerns, and particularly the  
6 point about closed partisan primaries,  
7 because this organization is dedicated to  
8 education and lowering barriers to entry  
9 and increasing participation, and I agree  
10 with you as many people felt and  
11 experienced this cycle, that barrier to  
12 either party registration or reregistration  
13 creates an unnecessary obstacle to voter  
14 participation. So I hear what you say and  
15 I appreciate it.

16 MS. FINCH: I wanted to add that  
17 we've also learned by attending the  
18 testimonies and the Commissioner's meeting  
19 since the election that there are ways in  
20 which when your voter information changes  
21 your party affiliation gets dropped without  
22 your knowledge.

23 MR. AVLON: As a default is what  
24 you're saying?

25 MS. FINCH: Yes, that when your

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2 address information is changed without your  
3 knowledge because you've changed your  
4 address, for instance, through your  
5 driver's license, you -- your information  
6 changed but you did not yourself confirm  
7 your party registration so it therefore  
8 defaults to unaffiliated, and that is  
9 really unacceptable. That's  
10 disenfranchising people.

11 MR. AVLON: It is. Thank you.

12 MR. CHANG: Thank you.

13 MR. RYAN: Would you like the form  
14 back.

15 MS. FINCH: I want you to keep it  
16 and change it.

17 MS. MAYERS: If we can have from 20  
18 to 25.

19 MS. WARREN: Good evening. My name  
20 is Shula Warren. I am the Policy  
21 Director for Manhattan Borough President  
22 Gale Brewer, and I'm going to be delivering  
23 remarks on her behalf and there are copies  
24 also circulating too.

25 Good evening. I am Manhattan

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Borough President Gale Brewer. I'd like to thank the Voter Assistance --

MR. CHANG: Just -- sorry to interrupt but just as with all the other folks who testified, if you can just keep it brief.

MS. WARREN: Of course. Absolutely. Thank you to the Voter Assistance Commission for holding this hearing today.

I have long been an advocate of voting reform and for those specific rule and policy changes that can make voting more efficient and accurate, but before detailing some of these ideas, I must first address the recent election on April 19th, 2016.

By most accounts, this primary election was a disaster. Of course there's an ongoing controversy regarding the purging of thousands of voters in the election rolls. However, other problems are bounded. A particularly upsetting problem was the lack of notification of changed polling places. While it may be

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necessary to change voters polling places,  
this should never be done lightly.

In this past election, voters were  
not sent notifications of new polling  
places, signs were not put up either in  
affected buildings or former polling sites,  
and many poll workers did not know about  
the changes. Furthering this confusion was  
the fact that people attempting to vote  
were often given incorrect information.

From what I could tell, the voting  
apps and websites established to inform  
people of their polling sites worked, poll  
workers did not have either onsite access  
or training in using this technology. Poll  
workers continue to use books and papers  
which were either inaccurate or simply not  
used correctly. Many of my constituents  
were sent to the wrong polling sites, only  
to have to return to their original site  
and search for their name in the books.  
This is particularly egregious when senior  
citizens with limited mobility are  
involved.



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City Council recently enacted legislation meant to rectify problems and notification of changed polling places and I look forward to seeing these changes in the next election. However, other problems serve to exacerbate the general confusion regarding polling sites. Many poll inspectors were missing making it impossible for sites to function properly. Then the Board of Election phones were down for several hours with nowhere to call for information or to report a problem. Voters' difficulties in attempting to vote were compounded and no contingency plan was in place.

New Yorkers living with disabilities also faced a range of problems this election as in practically every election held in our city. This year, however, my office worked in conjunction with the Center for the Independence of the Disabled New York to collect data on the accessibility of our polling sites. Here's a snapshot of our findings from the 128 primary day voters we

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polled: 16 percent faced confusing or missing signage pointing voters towards accessible entrances to polling sites; 17 percent found inaccessible paths to voting machines for voters who use wheelchairs; and of voters who use ballot marking devices, 37 percent faced difficulties marking their ballots.

Moving away from the specifics of this past election, I've been advocating for a series of reforms and here's just a couple of those ideas: First, address issues concerning poll workers, redesign poll worker training using standardized testing techniques with a passing score; create mechanisms such as evaluation sheets to better monitor poll workers; and more aggressively followup with and hold underperforming poll workers accountable; increase staffing at the Board of Elections to allow for better coordination of appointments; increase pay for poll workers; finally, work with the state bar to allow attorneys to receive pro bono and

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CLE credit for time spent as poll workers.

Second, change the mechanics of voting; eliminate or preprint portions of voters cards; institute a process of signing it by name rather than by election district; explore the use of electronic poll books; and print poll site specific finders and maps.

Third -- I'm sorry, I'm almost done -- we need to increase accessibility at our polling sites. This includes one, clearly marked signs in and around polling sites. Two, ensuring the proper training of polling workers. And three, ensuring accessible paths to and through each polling site.

Finally, change the rules around voting altogether. While these recommendations require state action, there are important changes that would serve to better enfranchise voters and increase voter participation. The stateship has no excuse absentee voting. It would change laws such that voters who use affidavit

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2 ballots but do not have party affiliations  
3 during primaries are not disqualified. It  
4 should permit online voting registration.  
5 It should enact same day registration.

6 There's so much to be done and I  
7 hope that we can commit to not only fixing  
8 problems, but actually enhancing our system  
9 of voting. Thank you.

10 MR. CHANG: Thank you.

11 (Applause.)

12 MR. CUESTA: Good evening. My name  
13 is Eddie Cuesta and I'm the New York State  
14 Director for Dominicanos USA, DUSA.

15 Dominicanos USA is a nonpartisan  
16 organization dedicated to empowering the  
17 Dominican American and the broader Latino  
18 community to voter registration, education  
19 and mobilization, as well as encouraging  
20 civic engagement of all levels.

21 I'd like to begin by thanking the  
22 Voter Assistance Advisory Committee for  
23 holding this hearing this evening and  
24 continuing their work in engaging voters  
25 and improving the voting process. We are

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still a new organization. We really appreciate the opportunity that NYC Votes has given us to share our experience from doing voter outreach in the Dominican American community and we are very grateful for Onida Coward Mayers and her staff for really helping us, you know, to reach this milestone in terms of helping our community.

Our testimony today will cover our experience doing GOT for the April 19th presidential primary and also our experience participating in Voter Day in 2016 in Albany.

On Tuesday, April 19th, New York State held its presidential primaries for the democratic and republican parties. These were big primary elections for both parties and the candidates were competing hard for their votes. For two weeks before the election, the DUSA team was hard work mobilizing voters to get out to the polls on election day because we wanted to make sure that regardless of who -- our

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community was able to exercise this right to vote and have its voice heard. Our team was hard at work day and night informing voters about the election day, the location of the perspective poll sites, the hour the polls will open, and even how to get there. Voters were very really excited and grateful to receive the information and the language from trusted community leaders in the Dominican USA community -- from Dominicanos USA.

Using our database of the nearly 100,000 New Yorkers we have registered over the past two years, DUSA canvassers was able to knock on over 36,000 doors in the neighborhoods where the most Dominican Americans live and made over 53,000 phone calls to those who could not reach in person. Taken two together, those door-to-doors and phone banked efforts, we generated over 20,000 direct contacts with voters and 85 percent of the contacts resulted in commitment to vote. In addition, we went sent out over 53,000 mail notifications to voters all

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across New York State and posted reminders on social media for our followers. This probates our reach. It's all part of our Dominican USA mission and taking Dominican American voters' participation to a level never seen before. Dominicanos USA will continue its work mobilizing voters in the Dominican American community and voters across New York State.

Of course on the actual days of election obstacles presented themselves. Dominican Americans who wanted to vote as reported in various media outlets during and after the election day, many voters could not find their names in the poll books when they tried to vote and found out their party affiliation had been changed without their knowledge. DUSA has seen this type of issues previously and was prepared to assist voters who faced these problems. DUSA trained poll monitors were placed at 25 poll sites throughout the northern Manhattan and the Bronx where there is the highest traffic of Dominican

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2 American voters.

3 What's stationed at our site, this  
4 poll site, are poll monitors directly  
5 assisting all voters who could not vote or  
6 were asked to vote by affidavits. Many  
7 times these voters needed assistance  
8 finding the correct polling location or  
9 confirming their registration status and  
10 addresses. In one case, a voter's name  
11 could not be found in the poll book because  
12 the poll worker was looking in the wrong  
13 book. DUSA also provided transportation to  
14 the polls for those voters who had  
15 difficulties getting to their polling  
16 locations, including senior citizens and  
17 voters who use wheelchairs. It is because  
18 of this experience that Dominicanos USA  
19 will continue to protect the right to vote  
20 for Dominican Americans and all citizens  
21 who wish to be part of our democratic  
22 process in all elections big and small,  
23 including the upcoming congressional  
24 primaries on June 28th.

25 We did work, you know, two years ago



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in the congressional primaries and we encountered a lot of difficulties in terms of poll sites being closed at the last moment, not being notified on time, and we hope on this primary on June 28th that we will be able to get the poll sites with sufficient time, not two weeks before. As I could say that we have worked very, very hard and done a great investment to send out this type of mailers for all the 53,000 voters that I mentioned. Very simple. Just put their poll site location exactly where they're going to go and vote and I think this is the type of information we need. We need more education, poll workers should be trained better, not, you know, at the last moment not knowing exactly, you know, what to do. And also, you know, this -- just this little simple little door hanger really does a great deal, even having poll monitors or poll watchers being with the voter outlook.

So it's very important if you could really suggest, you know, to the Board of

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2 Elections in New York City if poll sites  
3 and poll locations could not be closed and  
4 we could have the information on time.

5 If there is any questions, I'd be  
6 open to take any questions, and I would  
7 like to ask my colleague, Omar Suarez, who  
8 will testify in terms of Albany turnout.

9 Thank you.

10 MR. CHANG: Thank you very much.

11 (Applause.)

12 MR. SUAREZ: Thank you. Hello.

13 Good evening. My name is Omar Suarez. I  
14 an organizer at Dominicanos USA.

15 Eddie Cuesta is my colleague, and I'll be  
16 brief. I just want to share our experience  
17 on May 3rd in Albany.

18 We were one of the participating  
19 organizations and with us we had 25  
20 volunteers that day. We actually left from  
21 our South Bronx office. You know, the  
22 people we have, they're really dedicated.  
23 They were really happy for this experience.  
24 I'd say the majority of our team are either  
25 naturalized U.S. citizens or are in the

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2 process of becoming U.S. citizens so this  
3 interaction with the democratic process, it  
4 was really exciting for them. And so, you  
5 know, for that reason, we were out at 5:30  
6 in the morning in the rain waiting for the  
7 bus to get there. That's how dedicated we  
8 were.

9 You know, but there were some  
10 downsides, obviously. The interactions  
11 with the lawmakers were by and large good.  
12 There seemed to be a lot of absenteeism.  
13 We show up. One Bronx assemblyman  
14 was -- there was no one in his office, you  
15 know, no one at all, not even an aid. So,  
16 you know, we tried to call. We couldn't  
17 get any -- obviously there was no one  
18 there. So I don't know how that happens.  
19 It seems like this is just the only  
20 profession where it's acceptable to set an  
21 appointment and then just not be there when  
22 you get there, or another state senator  
23 when we get there we find out that she  
24 wasn't going to arrive until two hours  
25 after our appointment. I'm not sure what

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happened there either.

It's a little disappointing but the representatives that we did get to meet, they seemed to be open to the legislation. I personally support it and that's why I was the lead for Dominicanos USA for this trip.

I did have a couple questions. I tried my best to read up on the legislation, of course, but there was even some questions I couldn't answer from one Senator Parker of Brooklyn. I don't mean to throw his name out there like that but he made some great points. As he said, in his other life he's a political science professor. You know, how would -- well, claim that these changes that we're proposing here or that VAAC is proposing, Voter Better NY, wouldn't have affected the issues with purging voters from rolls on the April 19th election.

Now, is that true? I pose that question to this Committee. Would these have changes -- would these changes have

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2 made any difference for the issues that  
3 voters faced on April 19th? And I'll give  
4 anyone a chance to answer that.

5 MR. CHANG: Well, I think as a -- it  
6 all depends on how the technology is done.  
7 Like just say that technology does provide  
8 a way for this to be prevented because  
9 certainly if anything happens to change the  
10 database, that's all captured and recorded.  
11 You can't magically change data in a  
12 well-designed system.

13 MR. SUAREZ: So what you're saying  
14 is we wouldn't maybe not stop it from  
15 happening, but if it did happen it would be  
16 easier to trace how and when it happened?

17 MR. CHANG: Billing it on  
18 accountability.

19 MR. SUAREZ: That was where I'm  
20 going, accountability.

21 So the second question I had was,  
22 how would this Early Voting Bill hold  
23 responsible parties and responsible actors  
24 accountable for this 30-minute wait time?  
25 That's mentioned, specifically. So what

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2 would happen if, you know, someone waits  
3 45 minutes or an hour? How do we hold  
4 people accountable, or is there language in  
5 the bill for that? That was the other  
6 question that I really didn't have an  
7 answer for and so I'm posing it to the  
8 Committee.

9 MR. CHANG: I think the purpose is  
10 not to necessarily to only reduce the wait  
11 lines -- waiting lines but it's also to  
12 enable people to have flexibility in when  
13 they voted. So it's really to increase  
14 turnout, you know, much more than it is to  
15 decrease the size of the lines.

16 The biggest thing with the lines  
17 that I think is very interesting is that  
18 the lines were mostly about people trying  
19 to find out which ED they belonged to and  
20 that should have been solved easily by poll  
21 workers or others just walking up and down  
22 the row, taking people's addresses into  
23 their smart phone and looking up which ED  
24 they belonged to. You know, I did that  
25 for, you know, a half an hour in my polling

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2 place.

3 MR. SUAREZ: It's not that hard.  
4 It's as simple as a technological --

5 MR. CHANG: It sent a few dozen  
6 people through and, you know, technology  
7 can do some pretty cool things there.

8 MR. SUAREZ: I did want to followup  
9 on the accountability. So there's not  
10 really like a mechanism to hold anyone  
11 accountable if -- for that 30-minute?  
12 Because it's mentioned specifically a  
13 30-minute limit for the poll sites, you  
14 know, so it's hard to use that language and  
15 then you can't back it up because you don't  
16 have any mechanism to hold anyone  
17 accountable.

18 MR. CHANG: I'm not familiar with a  
19 30-minute provision.

20 MS. UDDIN: There is no time limit  
21 that you have to wait 30 minutes, 45  
22 minutes. I think there is no time.

23 MR. SUAREZ: I think in the early  
24 voting -- the Early Voting Bill has said  
25 something about a guarantee that no one

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will wait more than 30 minutes. I mean,  
let me know if I'm wrong. I believe that's  
in the bill.

So and then I just -- that was  
about it -- for voting. I also want to share  
my own personal experience from the  
April 19th election.

MR. CHANG: Great. Thank you so  
much.

MS. LOPREST: I would say that  
passing the Voter Empowerment Act, you  
know, whether or not that provision is  
enforceable or not would be a much, you  
know, one, would be a great step because  
one, it would solve a lot of these problem  
with people's purging because there would  
be voter registration rolls that you could  
check and verify, you would be able to  
register online so it would eliminate a lot  
of the issues about people having to type  
information. When you create an  
online database you would be able to say,  
hey, you didn't answer this question, like  
when you're entering anything in any kind



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2 of online shopping and, you know, that you  
3 would know vital pieces of information were  
4 not included and would know it in real time  
5 and you would be able to check it.

6 So I mean -- so I would encourage, I  
7 think that that small provision which, you  
8 know, may be aspirational, you know, --

9 MR. SUAREZ: You can count me among  
10 your supporters for sure.

11 MS. LOPREST: -- having voting over a  
12 course of a period of time would reduce lines,  
13 but if people are interested, I mean, again,  
14 as we mentioned in the beginning, we are --  
15 you know, we still have this petition online  
16 so, you know, a lot of those pieces of  
17 legislation would solve some of the problems  
18 that people have been talking about tonight,  
19 you know, not instantaneously but working  
20 towards making the voting process better.

21 MR. CHANG: Thank you so much.

22 MR. SUAREZ: Could I possibly share  
23 just my personal experience from  
24 April 19th? I had an issue that I shared  
25 with an assembly or --

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2 MR. CHANG: I think we're going to  
3 need to move on but thank you so much. You  
4 guys, you know, you guys are great allies.

5 (Applause.)

6 MR. CHANG: How many people are left  
7 remaining who wanted to testify?

8 MS. MAYERS: Two more, I think.

9 (Discussion of remaining speakers.)

10 MR. CHANG: Well, please come ahead.

11 MS. PEREZ: Thank you. Hi. My name  
12 is Marilyn Perez. Thank you very much for  
13 this opportunity to help if I can, to make  
14 voting more sexier, I don't know what,  
15 popular, you know, and I really wanted to  
16 help -- I like that idea very much of  
17 getting like an alert that there's -- like  
18 almost getting alerts when it's going to  
19 rain heavily. You know, get a voting  
20 alert, you can vote today, right now, come  
21 down, you know, or NY1 is really good about  
22 news too, you know, get their --

23 MR. AVLON: NY1 does a very good  
24 job.

25 MS. UDDIN: They're trying.

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2 MS. PEREZ: They're trying their  
3 best and they do great.

4 This was my first year as a poll  
5 worker. I never ever thought of doing it  
6 but something told me this year that it  
7 would be interesting and sure enough, it's  
8 led me to this room here today and to  
9 meeting some fabulous people who really  
10 care about the last gasps of our democracy.  
11 And purging became such a popular word  
12 in the last few months and then I -- when I  
13 studied to become a poll worker, they told  
14 me why it would be possible that some names  
15 wouldn't be in the book, right, there was  
16 this, this and this, but none of them was  
17 about duplicate names. Now, I'm hearing  
18 about duplicate names as a reason why  
19 people aren't able to vote and this is very  
20 fishy to me because it's not even in the  
21 poll worker book. So I'm just -- I kind of  
22 like really want to know about that.

23 MR. RYAN: Where did you learn that?

24 MS. PEREZ: About duplicate names?

25 In the course of the last month or two in

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2 conversation that some people's names are  
3 being purged because of duplicate names.

4 MS. GIBBS: What do you mean by  
5 duplicate names?

6 MS. PEREZ: That people are out of  
7 the books because there is more than one  
8 person with that name.

9 MS. GIBBS: Okay.

10 MS. PEREZ: And then the other  
11 thing, you probably heard this already,  
12 there weren't enough books, the education.  
13 I spoke to one person, I think she's still  
14 in the room, she became a poll worker ten  
15 years ago and she had to study fourteen hours  
16 or something, the class was like hours and  
17 hours, and this year my class was only two  
18 hours. I can't complain, but, you know, a  
19 lot of people didn't make the exam.

20 MR. RYAN: They didn't?

21 MS. PEREZ: They didn't. They  
22 failed. They flunked it with just two  
23 hours, you know, it was like tough. I  
24 mean, I wasn't sure I was going to pass  
25 either, but I did, you know.

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2 So I'd just like to see us get  
3 enough books because we're supposed to have  
4 one book per 300 people and surely we're  
5 short, and I'm glad everybody didn't show  
6 up because it would have been hard, really  
7 hard. And I guess that's it. I hope we  
8 have a better experience. As Ben Kallos  
9 said, we're going to have a super bowl of  
10 voting in November. I hope it's better. I  
11 hope we're all -- we can all get this thing  
12 together. Thank you.

13 MR. CHANG: Thank you so much.

14 MS. GIBBS: Thank you.

15 (Applause.)

16 MR. DOUGLAS: Hi. My name is  
17 Brian Douglas. I started tracking this as  
18 sort of an independent citizen journalist.  
19 Immediately following the elections, a  
20 friend of mine contacted me on the day of  
21 and told me, very distraught, that she was  
22 forced into an affidavit and extremely  
23 certain that she has been a democrat her  
24 whole life, most recently voting in the  
25 mayoral primary.

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2 I'd like to speak about the complete  
3 lack of confidence that every New Yorker  
4 should have in this Board of Elections.  
5 From what I have researched and going back  
6 to the Department of Investigations report  
7 in 2013 -- is everyone here familiar with  
8 that.

9 MS. GIBBS: Yes.

10 MR. DOUGLAS: So reading that and  
11 then the Oversight Committee hearing that  
12 ensued with City Council, finding our  
13 allies in City Council such as Ben Kallos,  
14 and you guys seem to really be an ally and  
15 I really want to say how much I appreciate  
16 what you have put together here as much as  
17 a struggle it might have been to get the  
18 word out, though I don't know you could  
19 have handled the volume if the work got  
20 out. And I just want to say that having  
21 now tracked this and gone to the last four  
22 Commissioners hearings over the last month,  
23 watching the live stream of the one that I  
24 didn't, they have had such a dismissive and  
25 condescending posture towards legitimate

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2 grievances. And I was there when about a  
3 hundred people showed up and everyone from  
4 voters, to poll workers, to witnesses,  
5 coordinators, all testifying to extremely  
6 disturbing issues, none of that bothered  
7 them. It would bother them if we went over  
8 our two minutes, and I thank you again for  
9 giving everybody an extension.

10 The only thing that really, really  
11 raised their ire was when someone just at  
12 the end refused to respect the decorum and  
13 dropped an F bomb. That just was the end  
14 of it. And I'll say yeah, that's not the  
15 most effective strategy but at the same  
16 time, everyone had been respectful up to  
17 that point and I thought it was very telling  
18 that that's all that really bothered them.

19 And another issue I just want to  
20 bring up and stress is that I don't think  
21 they have any credibility on this affidavit  
22 audit. Specifically, on Friday at the  
23 Oversight Committee testimony, I have here  
24 some notes from what Michael Ryan said.  
25 First of all, he made -- he said that -- he

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used the words that this was clearly  
troubling, this election. We don't see  
that sort of reaction when you actually  
interact with him as a member of the public  
but he tried to placate the City Council  
and say they consider this clearly  
troubling.

What's more, he stated that the  
Board had instituted an intense -- this is  
a quote -- "an intensive review process of  
all affidavit ballots and that each ballot  
in the invalid pile was scrutinized for  
potential eligibility over and above the  
routine and valid process." And today I  
went to the Commissioners hearing and I  
specifically asked him, can you tell me  
what you feel makes this qualify as being  
intensive or over and above your routine.  
And I was given a very long answer,  
exhaustive answer about well, every  
affidavit ballot that came in, we went to  
our computers and we printed it out and we  
have a stack of paper, you know, this big,  
and we went through that and their voting



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2 history and everything.

3 And I just had to do a quick  
4 spreadsheet today and just say if it took  
5 them what he's describing, printing it out  
6 and reading what you print out,  
7 conservatively 10 minutes, 15 minutes.  
8 We're talking about 30,000 hours worth of  
9 time and if I'm trying to get -- I've asked  
10 him, what was your staffing levels in this  
11 audit. I got a, we'll get back to you later.

12 Bridgitte Berman from WYNK has asked him  
13 similar questions about the totals of  
14 affidavits from previous years so we can do  
15 a -- she's been stonewalled continually on that.

16 And according to my calculations, if  
17 they had a staff of, I don't know, 30, 40,  
18 50, and they're all working ten-hour days  
19 doing nothing but looking at those  
20 affidavits, it would have required  
21 50 -- like the total number of days is  
22 2,500 days. Let's say though they had a  
23 staff of 50 people. So you break that  
24 down, that would have still required  
25 50 days to actually conduct an audit, and

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2 what you have heard here from people who  
3 tried to witness the audit, and that's one  
4 person, I've spoken to many in going to  
5 these meetings and talking to people, I  
6 simply do not believe them and based on  
7 City agency reports, I don't think anyone  
8 should. The problem is is that our allies,  
9 whether it's you or the City Council, seem  
10 to be toothless. Even the Mayor has  
11 offered them a challenge grant of  
12 \$20 million. Here's \$20 million and prove  
13 things, the transparency in performance,  
14 and they won't take it because it comes  
15 with conditions being that you should do  
16 your job better.

17 Thank you. That's all I got to say  
18 and I --

19 (Applause.)

20 MR. DOUGLAS: -- I want to find our  
21 allies with teeth, and if you guys are really  
22 about this and I know you're like well, we're  
23 trying to organize this, we need you to get  
24 a little more public with your anger, hold  
25 a press conference and say what we've heard

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2 is troubling. Use your microphone.

3 (Applause.)

4 MR. DOUGLAS: I am tired of hearing  
5 going forward from all the City agencies,  
6 we're going to fix this going forward.  
7 We've heard that about the Bush  
8 administration and all the crimes that were  
9 committed to get us into the wars in Iraq.  
10 We keep looking forward. When do we look  
11 back? When is it time to fix what  
12 happened? Thank you.

13 MR. RYAN: I have a quick question.  
14 Quick question, were you at the audit?

15 MR. DOUGLAS: I was not able to  
16 attend the audit but I have spoken now with  
17 several people who were. I can put you in  
18 contact with them.

19 MR. RYAN: I mean just in  
20 observations, did any of them anecdotally  
21 tell you how many people they witnessed as  
22 far as evaluating the affidavit ballots?

23 MR. DOUGLAS: Yeah. Well, I can  
24 tell you at least, Lisa Barri who spoke  
25 earlier, she mentioned that, you know,

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2 people were physically saying you can't go  
3 look at these specific parts of the process  
4 and that is correlated by other people who  
5 attempted to do it and described in detail  
6 the layout of the building where it's like,  
7 okay, they were counting them in  
8 this -- they were like assembling them in  
9 this one pile here where you could see it.  
10 Then when it came to count, they went into  
11 a closed room and then came out with this  
12 is the count. There are people who can  
13 testify to that. I can give you their  
14 names.

15 These audits, they need be  
16 independently done and I -- I'm with a  
17 group that formed the day after. We all  
18 just -- everyone who was like so riled up  
19 and just what's happening, we all came to  
20 where the site of the purges that were  
21 first reported back when it was just 60,000  
22 and we kept in touch and we've been keeping  
23 in touch, and we formed a small grassroots  
24 group called New York Election Justice and  
25 we're trying, to what degree we can,

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2 conduct independent investigations. We  
3 filed FOIAs. We're digging through things,  
4 we're talking to people, and we are just  
5 trying to be the bulldog in this fight that  
6 I feel like a lot of good voter groups like  
7 Common Cause and I'm in contact with people  
8 from there, Legal Women Voters, none of you  
9 seem to be able to like create that urgency  
10 and fierce advocacy for really like  
11 stopping what happened here. It deserves  
12 to be stopped and it's really unfortunate  
13 that yes, a lot of people who were upset  
14 about this are Bernie Sanders supporters  
15 but I'm completely nonpartisan in the  
16 problems of this.

17 MR. AVLON: For you and for  
18 everybody, you know, your passion as active  
19 citizens for election reform is what's  
20 going to be essential to keep holding their  
21 feet to the fire because there is a degree  
22 of sort of bureaucratic inertia which leads  
23 to lack of accountability and the problems  
24 we've seen. So just thank you all.

25 You know, the outcome, you know,

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2 goals aside, partisan, you know, feelings  
3 aside, passion about holding accountability  
4 in election reform is going to be the key  
5 to change this going forward. I'm going to  
6 use the phrase going forward even though  
7 it's not what you want to hear, but that's  
8 what we need to do and there's no  
9 substitute for active citizens like  
10 yourselves, so thank you.

11 MR. DOUGLAS: Thank you, and I hope  
12 we can keep counting on your support.

13 MR. MILLER: My name is  
14 Michael Miller and just some statements.  
15 You know, I've heard a lot of -- first of  
16 all, I want to thank you all of you for how  
17 civil, more than civil you've been because  
18 I was at the Board of Elections and that  
19 was more like a parole board than any other  
20 kind of board. I mean, they were so  
21 disinterested and abusive. They were  
22 actually annoyed that we were there and  
23 they let us know it. Somebody made a  
24 statement, well, we only usually have two  
25 people here during the week. You know,

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2 it's like -- I didn't understand -- you  
3 know, it's like why are you annoying us.

4 But do you know what I -- I mean, I  
5 can sit and tell you -- I can stand here  
6 and tell you, you know, I did the voter  
7 registration with Jesse and I was so  
8 involved and I stood out in Union Square  
9 Park, you know, in cold weather, but that's  
10 not what bothers me. What bothers me the  
11 most is that this is really voter  
12 suppression. Forget about purging. We're  
13 using all these nice words. It's voter  
14 suppression and, you know, when people talk  
15 about we're losing our democracy, you know,  
16 I've done a lot of research, we've never  
17 really had a democracy here, you see,  
18 because the powers that be really don't  
19 want us to vote. And, you know, this  
20 gentleman said, you know, we have to hold  
21 the elected officials feet to the fire, we  
22 have to be able to vote first, okay, before  
23 we can hold their feet to the fire.

24 And, you know, I've done research.  
25 Our founding fathers really didn't want a

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democracy. They did not want everybody to vote. They only wanted the powerful to vote. Well, do you know what, that's what's happening today, and the only way we can get people's attention, the public, you know, the people, you know, the masses of people is through our vote. And the only other way we're going to, and I really think is going to happen if we don't get this systemic problem fixed, is through civil disobedience, and I believe that we're going to have massive civil disobedience within the next 10 to 20 years because people have said enough is enough. They can't vote because they can't leave their third job, okay, so we need -- we have people -- you know, we think people are disinterested. They're more interested in eating and having food for their children, okay, and there's not much more a lot of workers here in New York, you know, minimum wage workers and all that stuff that can afford to do, so they have to work as much as they can get work.



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2 So, you know, we need to maybe have  
3 voting on the weekends here, okay, or a  
4 national holiday. You know, every other  
5 industrialized country has voting on  
6 weekends or it's a holiday. Here it's so  
7 much --

8 MR. CHANG: We've called for a  
9 ten-day -- a ten-day early voting period.

10 MR. MILLER: Yeah. I mean,  
11 something has to be done because we do not  
12 have a democracy unless everybody -- if  
13 every eligible voter can not have easy  
14 access to the polls, then this is not a  
15 democracy. You can call it -- you now, I  
16 can call myself Jesus Christ if I want to,  
17 but I'm not, okay, so if we choose to call  
18 this a democracy when we're suppressing the  
19 vote, then do you know what, we can call it  
20 a -- call it whatever you want but it's not  
21 a democracy. Thank you.

22 MR. AVLON: We encourage you not to  
23 do that, with regard to your name.

24 (Applause.)

25 MR. KORN: My name is Jeff Korn.

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2 I'm a poll worker up in the Bronx and I  
3 noticed that looking at the books of people  
4 that are in our location, only ones that  
5 are listed are democrats or republicans,  
6 and what if something was changed? We  
7 don't see their other -- whatever they were  
8 and it's stupid. Everything should be  
9 there and if they're a democrat, they vote  
10 democrat; if they're a republican, they  
11 vote republican. At least they would know  
12 they're registered. We don't know that  
13 they're registered. They think they're not  
14 registered and it's dumb.

15 One other thing about elections that  
16 is very important and it happened very  
17 badly with this particular election, there  
18 were two candidates, six people for Hillary  
19 and four for Bernie, a total of ten and you  
20 can have up to six. So why couldn't they  
21 have the other two being no name so at  
22 least it would be six, six; even, even.

23 Also, when -- there is no way to  
24 contact your poll location of what you're  
25 going to vote for until you get in there.

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2 You don't know it. There is no way of  
3 going on the web and checking your ED/AD  
4 and getting a list of all the things you're  
5 voting for. You don't know until the day  
6 of and that is dumb.

7 MS. LOPREST: There actually are a  
8 couple of electronic ballots that you can  
9 look on and get your ED, put in your  
10 address and get the ballot.

11 MR. KORN: I've tried that and going  
12 on the Board of Elections and you get  
13 nothing, and that's a big problem.

14 MS. LOPREST: I mean, I think that  
15 you're right about the confusion about the  
16 number of delegates and what you're  
17 actually voting for when you voted for  
18 those names, that were those list of  
19 delegates. That was very confusing. I do  
20 agree.

21 MR. KORN: It was. People didn't  
22 understand, especially we had people -- we  
23 didn't -- my poll location was half  
24 staffed. Each poll site had one person,  
25 not two, and we had nobody who spoke the

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2 language. If they had a problem with  
3 Spanish they asked a policeman outside to  
4 help them out. It's not right. And I was  
5 designated the lowest ED/AD that was opened  
6 to -- that was open -- people opened it up,  
7 no one even looked at it until three hours  
8 into the voting, even vote down what that  
9 was because it was too short of hand. I  
10 was outside putting on the -- things from  
11 outside. A lot of dumb things.

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: What poll  
13 site?

14 MR. KORN: I don't recall offhand.  
15 It was not my normal poll site. As a  
16 result, I had to do an absentee ballot  
17 because it was too far away for me to go  
18 for my -- to my normal poll site.

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I just wanted  
20 to add about the understaffed poll sites.

21 MR. CHANG: Do you want to come up  
22 and speak into the microphone?

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: About the  
24 understaffed poll sites, it was a problem  
25 at my poll site too and I believe that the

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reason for this is that the notices to work for the primary were sent out less than two weeks before the primary. I received mine less than two weeks before the date. It's an off-cycle date so a lot of the poll workers weren't available.

When you get your notice to work, you're not required to confirm that you're going to work, so the Board of Elections had no idea how many people were going to show up on that day. The process is that there's extra poll workers sent to the central Board of Election but you have to wait until the coordinator notices that people haven't arrived.

MR. CHANG: Yes, I get the whole picture.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The coordinator calls in for more people who then get dispatched by car service which takes a couple of hours. That early morning voting period is over by then. People who had to vote on their way to work, can't vote later on in the day have missed their chance to

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2 vote. It would be -- they have to send out  
3 the notices to work sooner and they have to  
4 require that poll workers confirm whether  
5 they're going to work or not.

6 MR. CHANG: There's lots and lots of  
7 what we call business process problems.

8 Is there anybody else who would like  
9 to testify?

10 (No response.)

11 MR. AVLON: Thank you, all.

12 MS. LOPREST: So I guess I would --

13 MR. CHANG: I prefer to have somebody  
14 who's not from CFB to do this, actually.

15 Umair, would you like to do this?

16 MR. KHAN: So given the frustrations  
17 -- and that's an understatement, right Jeff?  
18 So the Campaign Finance -- the Voter Assistance  
19 Advisory Committee resolves -- we're going  
20 to pass a resolution -- we're going to propose  
21 a resolution. I suspect we will pass this  
22 resolution given the extreme frustrations  
23 that you've relayed to us this evening.

24 So I'll read the resolution to you.  
25 The Voter Assistance Advisory Committee

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2 resolves to compile the election  
3 irregularities and the systemic problems  
4 attested to by citizens tonight and relay  
5 them to the Board of Elections and the  
6 various agencies investigating the  
7 irregularities in this election and to the  
8 City Council. The Committee will continue  
9 to followup on these troubling issues and  
10 will fight -- and will fight this good  
11 fight for the much needed reforms that we  
12 need in our election system in New York  
13 City and across New York State.

14 MR. CHANG: Do I have a motion?

15 MS. GIBBS: Aye.

16 MR. CHANG: Second?

17 MR. AVLON: Second.

18 MR. CHANG: All in favor?

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Sorry. We  
20 would like a recount, and if not a recount  
21 then at the very least that that 130,000  
22 people who were unable to vote in Brooklyn,  
23 and I believe there was also another number  
24 as well, that those voters should be  
25 allowed to cast their ballots.

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MR. KHAN: So that's not within our jurisdiction. So if you look at what the powers of this body are under the City Charter, that's not within our mandate and so what we're doing is we've collected, including your suggestion and your concerns suggestions because other people relayed those as well, is to collect that information, share it with those who are responsible and do have that authority. And so we're going to relay all your concerns. I mean, there have been so many. I mean, I wasn't even aware about that poll worker issue that notices were only sent two weeks before and that there there's no check-in system as to whether you can even perform your duties that day. I mean, that just baffles my mind.

So, you know, we are taking these issues -- we're going to -- we've collected this information, notes have been taken, there's video of this and we have a record and that will be relayed.

MR. AVLON: And hopefully all these



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experiences and these frustrations will translate to more momentum behind our overall efforts to lower barriers to participation and to pushing for election reforms which will answer many, if not all of your absolutely valid frustrations with the state of election system.

MS. LOPREST: And I understand the idea that, you know, there's now and there's moving forward, but, I mean, it's really, really important. I mean, the elected officials, as many of you have said, either don't think that people think this is important or, you know, think that they can get away with doing this and not making any fundamental changes to the law, and what they really need to know is that there are. I mean, how many people came out tonight to testify, to voice their concerns, that you people are ordinary citizens, that the elected officials need to know that there need to be fundamental changes to the election system, that the people do care about how elections are run

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2 and administered in New York State and New  
3 York City and that the laws that they can  
4 stand behind and say oh, we're not going to  
5 do this, we're not going to do that because  
6 the law says that, need to be changed so  
7 that people can vote on multiple days, that  
8 they can register more easily, that they  
9 can register sooner, and to -- if they're  
10 going to continue to have closed primaries,  
11 that they can change their party  
12 affiliation sooner to the election, and  
13 it's really people like you who are going  
14 to have to do that.

15 MR. KHAN: And disability access and  
16 everything else, absolutely.

17 MS. UDDIN: And another thing is  
18 that -- thank you for being here,  
19 everybody's here, because that is why we  
20 organize that. We want to hear from you  
21 guys how we can improve, how we can engage,  
22 how we can reach out to you guys, and that  
23 is what we are also learning to give you  
24 more advance so that you can give us more  
25 advice, how we can improve and we want to

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2 hear how we can progress from all that and  
3 reach out to you guys.

4 I think if I guys want to reach out  
5 to anybody in the future, community  
6 organization, just to tell them any  
7 information. I think a couple of people  
8 said they got e-mails or anyhow there. Why  
9 don't you guys expanding to community or  
10 reach out to the news media to promote it  
11 so that we want to hear, we want to learn  
12 and we want to see how we can improve. That  
13 is our mission and mission to improvement.

14 You guys are voters. We are also  
15 voters and we want to get more involved to  
16 get expanding our voters.

17 MR. CHANG: So, thank you.

18 So we have to complete our vote. So  
19 we had a motion, we've had a second.

20 All in favor?

21 (Chorus of Ayes.)

22 MR. CHANG: So passed unanimously.

23 Thank you very much.

24 I think some of us may stay around  
25 for a few minutes if you'd like to chat,

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2 and I just want to thank everybody here  
3 very much, and I also want to thank my  
4 Committee members who serve on this  
5 Committee without compensation as  
6 volunteers because you believe in the  
7 mission. And I think -- I just want to  
8 also convey to everybody here that we're  
9 all in this together as voters and we hear  
10 your outrage.

11 MR. AVALON: And as citizens.

12 MR. CHANGE: Thank you.

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I want to say  
14 for the atmosphere because I was the first  
15 one thrown out at the Board of Elections  
16 and I was really upset, you know. I duly  
17 did not expect to be treated like that in a  
18 public building. You know, I have some  
19 legitimate concerns which I didn't bring  
20 up, you know, because I'm still -- it's  
21 just shell-shocked from what happened to me,  
22 you know. Not only was I thrown out with  
23 no explanation, but I was intimidated. And  
24 I explained I had PTSD and did not like it.  
25 It really was -- you know, he brought it up

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and I really want to say what a difference it is to feel like you're being listened to. So you need to be thanked from all of us.

MR. CHANG: Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We want somebody to hear us.

MR. KHAN: Thank you, but just because you let it out doesn't mean you have to give up, so keep on going.

(Whereupon, the matter concluded.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF NEW YORK )  
COUNTY OF RICHMOND ) ss:

I, JENNIFER CASSELLA, a Notary Public  
within and for the State of New York, do hereby  
certify:

I reported the proceedings in the  
within-entitled matter, and that the within  
transcript is a true record of such proceedings  
to the best of my ability.

I further certify that I am not related  
to any of the parties to this action by blood  
or 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 3rd day of June, 2016.

\_\_\_\_\_  
JENNIFER CASSELLA

**Campaign Finance Board - Voter Assistance Advisory Committee  
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