

1 NEW YORK CITY
2 OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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11 BILL SIGNING

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13 November 3, 2008

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 MAYOR BLOOMBERG: Good morning, everyone. I am
3 pleased to see that a lot of people care about HPD and some
4 of the demapping bills and if anybody wants to talk about
5 them, I'll be happy to do it.

6 Let us start because we have six bills before us
7 today. The first is Introductory Number 824A, sponsored at
8 the request of the Administration by Council Members Dilan,
9 Fidler, Nelson, White and Jackson.

10 Introductory number 824A improves the process by
11 which the Department of Housing preservation and Development
12 informs building owners of violations. Owners of multiple
13 dwellings are required, as you know, to file an owner's
14 registration statement with the City so that they can be
15 informed by HPD with any problems in their buildings. When
16 such a building changing hands and a new owner fails to file
17 an owner registration statement, the law requires HPD to
18 send violations to the previous owner. Introductory Number
19 824A will enable HPD to invalidate a building registration
20 if the previous owner sends documentation to HPD that they
21 have sold the property.

22 Furthermore, Introductory number 824A will require
23 all non-owner-occupied one and two-family homes to register
24 as well.

25 This legislation, we think, will ensure that

1 property owners are made aware of any problems with their
2 buildings and that prior owners of these buildings are not
3 inconvenienced for an existing negligence.

4 I want to thank the Department of Housing,
5 Preservation and Development, Commissioner Shaun Donovan and
6 his staff, for their work on this bill, and also the City
7 Council for approving this legislation.

8 Would either of you City Councilmen like to add
9 anything?

10 Nobody has signed up to speak on this. Would
11 anybody like to speak on this bill? If not, I will sign the
12 bill.

13 (No response.)

14 Today's date is the 3rd, the day before Election
15 Day.

16 (Mayor Signing Bill.)

17 Councilman, Councilman?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER: I'll take a few, if you don't
19 mind.

20 MAYOR BLOOMBERG: You can take at least one or
21 two for later on.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER: I only took three.

23 MAYOR BLOOMBERG: Let me just stop for one
24 second, I meant to before we started this, last night, as
25 many of you, Terrence Tolbert, who was a valued member of

1 our administration and he had become a personal friend of
2 mine, had a massive heart attack in Nevada where he was
3 working on Senator Obama's campaign. Terrence was somebody
4 that not only was he one of the most likable people in the
5 world, he was one of the most hard-working people in the
6 world. He had great judgment and a great feel for people.
7 It really is a great tragedy. Our administration will miss
8 him. The City will miss him. The country will miss him.

9 All of our prayers go out to his wife Frieda and
10 his mother. We'll announce the funeral arrangements when
11 they're made, but this really is a tragedy and puts things
12 in perspective. Sort of one of the nice things about
13 November 4th was going to be that Terrence would come back
14 and now he is not going to come back and I know we all wish
15 him well.

16 The next four bills before us today are:

17 Introductory Number 500, sponsored by Council
18 Members Avella, Palma.

19 Introductory Number 608, sponsored by Council
20 Members Addabbo, Comrie, and Fidler.

21 Introductory Number 773, sponsored by Council
22 Members Addabbo, Comrie and White.

23 Introductory Number 815, sponsored by Council
24 Member Gerson.

25 These four bills change the names of 14

1 thoroughfares in Queens and Manhattan and make corresponding
2 changes to the New York City map. These changes were
3 requested by local community groups and approved by the
4 respective community boards to eliminate ambiguity in the
5 existing names and eliminate confusion in locating these
6 areas for emergency responders.

7 I want to thank the Department of Transportation,
8 Commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan and her staff, for their
9 work on this bill. I would also like to thank the Council
10 for approving this legislation.

11 Would any of the Council Members care to add
12 anything?

13 (No response.)

14 Would anybody like to speak about this bill?

15 We have one, Joseph Garber, civic activist.

16 Joseph?

17 MR. GARBER: Good morning, Mayor Bloomberg, and
18 all assembled. My name is Joseph Garber. I'm a civic
19 activist.

20 On October 23, the Council's committee on Parks
21 and Recreation passed Intros 500, 608, 776, and 815, which
22 mandates that the official map of the City of New York be
23 amended. However, I just want to highlight something.
24 Several weeks ago, when we renamed 84 streets, I don't
25 recall there was a provision that the City map was to be

1 amended. So I don't know if there's a difference between
2 this type of renaming and a regular renaming, but other than
3 that, please go ahead and sign the bill.

4 Thank you.

5 MAYOR BLOOMBERG: Thank you for that.

6 Would anybody else like to add anything?

7 (No response.)

8 If not, I will sign all four bills.

9 (Mayor signing bills.)

10 Councilman, thank you.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER: Thank you.

12 MAYOR BLOOMBERG: The final bill before us today
13 is Introductory Number 845A, co-sponsored by Council Members
14 Felder, Comrie, Koppell, Recchia, and Stewart, at the
15 request of the administration. Introductory Number 845A
16 would amend the City's charter provisions regarding term
17 limits by changing the number of full consecutive terms of
18 office that may be served by a City elected official from
19 two to three terms.

20 The bill has generated considerable public debate,
21 which is good, and I understand that the process objections
22 made by its opponents. Some have pushed for a special
23 election next year, but given the time requirements of a
24 Charter Revision Commission, followed by Federal review
25 under the Voting Rights Act, followed, in all likelihood, by

1 lengthy court challenges that could drag through the spring
2 and even into the ballot petitioning season, candidates
3 would be left in limbo well into 2009, making it extremely
4 difficult to organize campaigns and solicit support.

5 The fiscal challenges we face in addressing the
6 economic down turn, as you know, are daunting. The great
7 progress we have made in recent years is now threatened by
8 turmoil in the financial markets that has carried echos of
9 the 1930's. This is the backdrop for the term-limit debate.
10 Whereas a year ago we could think of term limits in
11 theoretical or ideological terms, crisis has a way of
12 forcing us to put pragmatism first.

13 The City Charter gives the City Council the
14 authority to amend the term-limits law and so the question
15 for Council Members and for me was this: Is it in the best
16 interests of the City to extend term limits from two to
17 three, giving voters more choices next November, a time when
18 we could be in a full fledged recession? I believe the
19 answer to that is yes, and after considerable debate and two
20 days of public hearings, the majority off the City Council
21 agreed, choosing substance over process and pragmatism over
22 ideology.

23 Ultimately, the voters will have the chance to
24 decide whether they agree, and that's important to remember.
25 The people will render the final verdict on this bill

1 because it empowers to decide who they want in office.

2 I will now turn to the bill sponsors and to any
3 other elected officials willing to make a statement.

4 Council Member?

5 COUNCIL MEMBER: Thank you very much, Mr. Mayor.
6 Good morning. I appreciate the input that we received from
7 the public during our hearings and we heard some very
8 passionate debate both for and against this measure. I've
9 listened to my constituents and the people of Coney Island
10 have spoken out loud and clear that never before have they
11 seen any Mayor attempt to take on the rezoning and the
12 revitalization of Coney Island. Never before has anyone
13 come forward and said, "We will give you a community center,
14 a community center for years that the people have waited for
15 in Coney Island, and this Mayor has stepped up to the plate,
16 has come forward to undertake that promise where it is going
17 to begin.

18 The people of my district say, "Thank you, Mr.
19 Mayor. They realize that we are facing very tough economic
20 times and they're worried. Many of them have told me that
21 they want the option of voting for a Mayor with eight years
22 of experience and a proven record of success. They want the
23 opportunity to vote for a City Council that has worked with
24 the Mayor and knows how to fight for them.

25 Next year, during the elections, the public will

1 have the opportunity to judge us when they come out to vote.
2 That's why, Mr. Mayor, I'm asking you to sign this bill
3 today. Thank you.

4 Councilman?

5 COUNCIL MEMBER: Good morning. Much has been
6 said about this bill and if we go back and look at all the
7 other bills that we have changed based on the fact that we
8 were elected to make tough decisions, we have made decisions
9 based on a bill with CCRB; we have made decisions on a bill
10 with campaign finance, which initially they put in a
11 referendum. I think we were elected to make these tough
12 decisions, and this is a time when people can look at us and
13 see that we have made a tough decision to represent the
14 people.

15 This is democracy at its best, whereby we can give
16 people the choice whether to vote for us in the general
17 election or to remove us because we have made a tough
18 decision. Thank you.

19 Mr. Mayor, I ask you to sign this bill.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER: Good morning, Ladies and
21 Gentlemen. I don't want to give the Mayor more credit than
22 he deserves. He's a nice guy, but on an issue of term
23 limits let me just say that I sat through the hearings as
24 the Chairman of the Government Operations Committee for
25 almost two days, and there was a lot of testimony, a lot of

1 testimony. Mayor Koch, Governor Cuomo, Borough Presidents
2 and Former Speaker Vallone, among others.

3 Anybody who listened to the testimony heard very
4 clearly what this issue is about. This issue is not about
5 Mayor Bloomberg, and this issue is not about the City
6 Council. This issue is about the law of New York City and
7 how it works, and as Mayor Koch said so articulately, there
8 are a number of different methods, there are a number of
9 different legal methods by which to extend term limits, one
10 of which is voting for it, and neither one of the options is
11 any better or any worse.

12 So I am delighted to be here and I ask you to sign
13 this bill, and I thank you for allowing us to be part of it.

14 Thank you, Councilman.

15 MR. JACKSON: Good morning, everyone. My name is
16 Robert Jackson and I represent Northern Manhattan on the
17 City Council. I voted "yes" to extend term limits because,
18 one, I've never been in favor of term limits from day one;
19 and, number two, when you look at the statistics from the
20 Board of Elections, in 1993, the people of Manhattan said
21 "no" to term limits, the majority of the people. In 1996,
22 the people of Manhattan said "yes" to an extension.

23 I, also, in looking back from an historical
24 perspective, my colleague Stanley Michaels, who served in
25 the City Council before me, was against term limits. So all

1 things considered, I think that this is the best thing to do
2 for New York City and I support it wholeheartedly and look
3 forward to the Mayor signing the bill and look forward to
4 the dialogue with all of my constituents, those in favor and
5 those against. Life goes on.

6 MAYOR BLOOMBERG: Thank you.
7 Councilman?

8 COUNCIL MEMBER: Thank you very much. I am here
9 in support of this bill and I would hope that the Mayor
10 would sign this bill. I think I've been opposed to term
11 limits historically for what it has meant for minority
12 communities in terms of its not allowing the opportunity for
13 the development of seniority, and we've seen, in many cases,
14 the use of term limits which have actually served to
15 eliminate the development of empowerment of minority
16 communities.

17 Therefore, I think it's important that we look
18 beyond trying to deal with a referendum government, but this
19 is a government by and for the people, so this is the
20 opportunity for people sending us here to do their business
21 because we can't have everyone here, so that opportunity
22 exists and it also gives everyone an opportunity to run.

23 I always tell people, "Term limits are every
24 election," either you will elect the person in or you will
25 not elect them. So term limits exist at the ballot box each

1 and every election year.

2 Sign the bill.

3 MAYOR BLOOMBERG: Thank you.

4 We have a lot of people who want to speak, and we
5 will try to be as accommodating as we possibly come.

6 Haida, what are the ground rules? You want to go
7 ahead and -

8 THE CLERK: Each speaker will be limited to two
9 minutes. Our first group of speakers include Peter Vallone,
10 Sr., Borough President Molinaro, Borough President Marshall,
11 Borough President Markowitz, and Borough President Stringer.

12 If each of you can come up individually and offer
13 your testimony.

14 BOROUGH PRESIDENT VALLONE: Thank you very much,
15 Mr. Mayor. Let me just add for the record, the passing of
16 Terrence Talbert was a great loss. He used to work for me
17 as well as you, but he worked for all the people of the City
18 and my regrets and prayers go to his family and everyone who
19 loved him as we did.

20 I just want to read seven quick facts into the
21 record to avoid any misunderstandings:

22 1) Term limits was a dismal failure under the
23 Articles of Confederation, and that's why it's
24 unconstitutional, both in the Federal government and in most
25 of the states.

1 2) Contrary to the facts, term limits was
2 instituted by only one man who spent millions to convince
3 the public, as his commercials recently stated, that all
4 elected officials are like dirty diapers and need to be
5 changed often.

6 3) Contrary to the most recent misstatement by
7 some who are opposed to this bill, minority representation
8 in the Council was increased by reason of the 1989 Charter
9 expanding the Council from the 35 to 51 members, and
10 certainly not the passage of term limits back in 1992 and
11 1996.

12 Further, I speak to the Council, I opposed
13 changing the Charter in 1999 to 12 years because we did not
14 have not because we did not have the authority to do so,
15 we certainly did as a City Council, but because Ron Lauder,
16 at that time, said he would immediately institute another
17 one-sided referendum, and this could have gone back and
18 forth and would have been the worst thing for good
19 government in the City.

20 5) On the other hand, if in 1999 the then Mayor
21 would have agreed as you do now to place a referendum on a
22 ballot deciding the question in an intelligent debate,
23 rather than in a one-sided media blitz, I would have gladly
24 passed this bill, the same bill that you have now, then.

25 6) The policy of this City was decided by one man

1 who paid for this out of his own pocket. Is this the real
2 meaning of democracy? I think not and thank the Speaker
3 and the Council for bringing this bill before you and doing
4 the right thing, rather than what appears to be the popular
5 thing. Let me just give you one example of why term limits
6 is so contrary to good government.

7 Back in 1990, 1991, as many of you in this room
8 will understand, this City was at a terrible law and order
9 crisis. We had to then pass a very unpopular sir tax on our
10 income tax in order to rebuild our entire criminal justice
11 system. At that time, we, in the Council, said that we
12 would give that temporary tax back in eight years, because
13 we thought the City would be safe by then, and it was. At
14 the time that sir tax expired, the then Mayor wanted to use
15 that sir tax to move Yankee Stadium from The Bronx to
16 Manhattan. We said "no," and we kept our commitment. We
17 gave it back. If it wasn't for the fact that you had
18 experienced Council Members there, Yankee Stadium would be
19 in Manhattan now. That's one of the examples. I could go
20 on and on.

21 Campaign Finance Act, the first No-Smoking Law,
22 making homeless a situation where you go to housing rather
23 than to a shelter; these were all things that the Council
24 did that took over time. Experience in governing, Mr.
25 Mayor, is the most important thing we have going for us. I

1 urge you to sign the bill.

2 MAYOR BLOOMBERG: Thank you.

3 Haida, do you want to make sure the clock works,
4 which it was not working and give people a signal.

5 Peter's been a friend for a long time. I had
6 nothing to do with the clock.

7 (Laughter.)

8 If you could just give people a little bit of
9 signal because if we have as many people as we think, this
10 -

11 BOROUGH PRESIDENT MOLINARO*: Good morning, Mr.
12 Mayor.

13 MAYOR BLOOMBERG: Sir?

14 BOROUGH PRESIDENT MOLINARO*: I'm here in support
15 of 845A and ask you to sign. I'd like to take my minute and
16 55 seconds to explain why.

17 I was one of the fortunate people that was the
18 Deputy Borough President for 12 years, then became Borough
19 President. That being the fact, I was able to find the
20 Men's Room. Other than that, normally, when a person takes
21 office, whether it be for Council, for Borough President,
22 for Congress, it's something which is completely new. It
23 takes you two or three years to put together a good staff;
24 to find out how bill are introduced.

25 By the time your first term is over, you are now a

1 lame duck. So now you know the system; you know the
2 Commissioners, you know who to go to, but you are a lame
3 duck, actually. So you start to put in legislation and
4 before you start to get movement on it and cooperation,
5 you're out of office. Eight years is just not enough. 12
6 years is a necessity to have an effective person in office.
7 So I am pleasant with you and I am asking you to go forward
8 and sign. This is not only something which is temporarily,
9 as far as I am concerned, it should be permanent. It should
10 be permanent. You should give the people the opportunity to
11 give their Council people the time that's required to be an
12 effective legislator.

13 Thank you.

14 MAYOR BLOOMBERG: We have another City
15 Councilman joining us. We will try to work them in.

16 BOROUGH PRESIDENT MARKOWITZ: Thank you very,
17 very much. First off, to the critics of this bill, I want
18 to assure them that democracy will be preserved. The way
19 they present it, it's like our very democratic foundation is
20 being shaken, and that's ridiculous. There have been very
21 few issues that have come in front of government that have
22 more self-interest than this issue, I have to tell you that.

23 The truth of the matter is that our Mayor, Michael
24 Bloomberg, merits the right to run for reelection, and he
25 and everyone else that choose to run again face those that

1 we serve, the voters, and they will hold the ultimate
2 decision.

3 The truth of the matter is that term limits are
4 bad government, in my opinion. When the voters voted for
5 this, they weren't given a choice, "Are you in favor of term
6 limits, and if you are, one term, two terms, three terms?"
7 They were not provided that. They were given one option,
8 "Yay" or "Nay?" I think, as Peter Vallone said, with a one-
9 sided campaign to whip people up in a frenzy to throw all
10 the bums out, the voters, in my opinion, made a very bad
11 mistake.

12 What this does, and I want to emphasize, this
13 preserves, even though I'm against it, term limits. We're
14 not throwing term limits out. Some voters believe that we
15 are. Only the public has a right to throw term limits out.
16 What we are merely doing is merely extending the right of
17 some of those who are in public office to run once again,
18 and to serve a maximum of 12 years, if the public makes that
19 decision, rather than eight years. That's all we're
20 changing; a very modest change.

21 So, Mr. Mayor, I congratulate you for your
22 leadership on this, and the City Council, I congratulate you
23 as well. You're standing up for solid and good government
24 and the democratic process. Thank you.

25 BOROUGH PRESIDENT MARSHALL: Good morning, Mr.

1 Mayor, and Members of the Council. I'm here in support of
2 this legislation. I'll just read my very brief statement:

3 As President of the great Borough of Queens for
4 the past seven years, an individual who served in the City
5 Council for 10 years, a member of the New York State
6 Assembly for nine years, a total of 27 years in elective
7 office, I know first hand just how much experience matters
8 in government. I have always held that voters should be
9 able to benefit from the valuable experience their elected
10 officials gain during their term in office. It is clear to
11 me that two terms does not allow adequate time.

12 When election day comes, voters should always have
13 the opportunity to choose the person they believe to be the
14 most qualified candidate. Let's be clear, term limits do
15 not simply limit the number of years an elected official may
16 serve, they limit the number of choices a voter has. If
17 they have an excellent person serving them, they want to
18 keep that person. This forbids them from doing that. That
19 is a hindrance to good government. We need experience.

20 The people of our City deserve the right to choose
21 the most experienced leaders for the very tough times ahead,
22 and particularly today, when we have such a crisis facing
23 us, our Mayor has got lots of experience on the financial
24 level. I would say that's one of his great areas of
25 expertise. We need that right now and we need this Council

1 as it is. Now, some of them are going to run for other
2 offices, but we need all the experience we can muster right
3 now to get us through this crisis.

4 I support this legislation in the name of good
5 government. Thank you.

6 BOROUGH PRESIDENT STRINGER: Good morning Mayor
7 Bloomberg and Members of the City Council. I also do want
8 to just take a minute to mourn the loss of Terrence Tolbert
9 today. It's ironic that he was in Nevada working on the
10 biggest election in history and all that that's going to
11 bring and how important it is that this bill signing is the
12 day before that election, because this really is about our
13 representative democracy.

14 By any measure, 12 is better than eight. The
15 reason 12 is better than eight is because the reality is
16 that we all know what happens when you get elected in a
17 term-limited environment. It takes four years to learn the
18 job. It takes another four years to now take that knowledge
19 and actually make a difference, and just when you're at the
20 point where you figure out the roadmap, you then have to
21 leave and the lobbyists take a sigh of relief because
22 they're already figuring out the next group of people.

23 We should stop this madness and nonsense once and
24 for all. We should create this extension because the people
25 have debated, people have thought about it, people have

1 testified. It's a great credit to the City Council, the
2 amount of work that's gone in. Look what's happening in
3 City Hall on the steps, this is representative democracy at
4 its best. We've had protests and demonstrations and we
5 don't all agree, and we don't only do this because of self-
6 interest, we do this because we're trying to figure out how
7 to grapple with making this government better.

8 I want to urge the Council and the Mayor to think
9 about one thing; let's continue what we've started. Let's
10 empower a Charter Revision Commission immediately. Let's
11 put on the table how to make government better and more
12 transparent, figuring out how it should move in these very
13 difficult financial times, but let's also put together a
14 ballot referendum that talks about getting rid of term
15 limits altogether, because, after all, we have elections.

16 I urge the Campaign Finance Board, the best
17 Finance Board we have in the country, to figure out a way to
18 subsidize a term-limit referendum so that we can have a
19 level playing field; so we don't have a billionaire highjack
20 the term-limit referendum the way he did a decade ago. We
21 can accomplish all this through this great representative
22 democracy, the City Council, and all the people in this
23 City. I urge you to sign this bill and then create a
24 Charter Revision Commission to finish this job.

25 Thank you very much.

1 MAYOR BLOOMBERG: Thank you.

2 We have one City Councilman who has just joined
3 us. Tom, would you like to add anything?

4 COUNCIL MEMBER WHITE: Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

5 I think I owe an explanation to my constituents
6 and to my fellow New Yorkers in terms of why I support
7 extending term limits. As some of you know, I was in the
8 Council in '93 and I had to leave because of term limits,
9 abiding by the law that was passed by the voters, but during
10 that long fight, I was fighting for the fact that we should
11 not have term limits.

12 It's a great disservice to the people of this City
13 of New York, even the thought of putting term limits on a
14 ballot. Now, I don't know about many of you who are
15 acquainted with the Civil Rights Movement, but there was a
16 lot of blacks and Jews and people of all faiths fighting for
17 the right to vote, and the reason why you had the right to
18 vote was to put the power in the people's hands. As soon as
19 kind of referendum that would deny a person the right to
20 vote, I am against.

21 Now, I have many of you talk about why and how a
22 person deserves three terms. I haven't heard anybody talk
23 about the disconnect in representation in government. You
24 don't have term limits in the Congress. You don't have term
25 limits in the state or U.S. Congress. You don't have term

1 limits in State Assembly. You don't have term limits in the
2 State Senate. But when you get to New York City, what you
3 want to do is disconnect the continuity of government and
4 the goals and objectives that have been set by bringing in
5 fine new people, yes, but those projects will fall by the
6 wayside.

7 I stand here today to say to you that we could
8 have voted that term limits when I was in service, we could
9 have voted it out, but it never came out of committee, to
10 get rid of it altogether, and we didn't do it and we should
11 have done it. So, yes, I'm not looking to be a career
12 politician, but I'm going to be a career American and a New
13 Yorker and I would like to see my community represented the
14 way that it should because you are denying me my right to
15 vote for somebody that I want to keep there, by telling me I
16 have to choose some other people. That is not good
17 government. That is a quick shuffle at the bottom where all
18 politics is local and we won't get as much done as we could
19 get done.

20 That is why I voted. It's not Mayor Bloomberg,
21 and I'm sick and tired of hearing about people and their
22 money. It's not about him, it's about the office, the
23 office of the Mayor. It's about the office of the Borough
24 Presidencies. It's about the office of the City Council,
25 and as soon as you tap on a name, then you make it personal.

1 This is not personal, this is responsible government.

2 Now, you want to give Mayor Bloomberg his kudos,
3 yes, he's been a very good Mayor, and if we had no term
4 limits, he could run again. So people will have their
5 choices, but I think that the kind of threats that I
6 received during this issue, representing the people's
7 business, for other people's self-interests, is the worst
8 thing that could happen to a City. We're talking about the
9 right to vote. We're talking about making history tomorrow
10 with people who are truly American, with different points of
11 view, and we're talking about bringing America together, and
12 we're talking about bringing this City together. We have to
13 be able to do that in a positive way, not for headlines and
14 TV shots.

15 Let's really look at it for what it really is. I
16 want the right to vote for whomever I want to vote for
17 however long I want to vote for them, as long as they are
18 providing a service for me, and I want my constituents to
19 have the same opportunity.

20 Thank you very much, Mr. Mayor.

21 MAYOR BLOOMBERG: Thank you. I think Tish James
22 is next, and she is a City Council woman and to be
23 absolutely fair, Tom went a little bit over and we never ran
24 the clock for the others, so the same thing for you. Within
25 two or three minutes would be fine.

1 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: First, my heart and
2 prayers are with Terrence Tolbert and his family. Terrence
3 and I worked in Albany for 10 years. Terrence was a very
4 close friend. I choose to celebrate his life and not to
5 mourn his loss, and I will remember in the dawn of the
6 Midnight hour his smile and his laughter.

7 Mr. Mayor, what will be your legacy? Do you not
8 hear the murmur and the mutterings of the people who are
9 concerned about term-limit extension? Do you not see the
10 fermenting of a public storm of protest and indignation over
11 a contrived process and a flawed bill? Should the public
12 process be negotiated? Should it be bartered away? Should
13 you not listen to the voices should you only listen to the
14 voices of the elite few as opposed to the voices of the
15 many?

16 With the stroke of a pen, Mr. Bloomberg, Mr.
17 Mayor, you will preempt democracy. You will redesign
18 history. Never in the history of this City or the nation
19 have we ever postponed the transfer of power, regardless of
20 the merits of the men. It goes against the very concept of
21 democracy. What is so ironic, Mr. Mayor, is as I traveled
22 to Pennsylvania over the last couple of weeks, there's this
23 electricity, it's palpable, and tomorrow voters have a
24 chance to steer the country back to a higher ground, to
25 restore our standing around the globe. The voters have that

1 power in their hand tomorrow and they're excited.

2 Mr. Mayor, what you and I should do as leaders is
3 promote democracy and not curtail it. Unfortunately, what I
4 have witnessed and what my constituents have witnessed and
5 the constituents of each and every member who sits with you
6 today who has contacted my office and said that they support
7 my position, is the debasement of politics, which rests in
8 part on this notion that there's the capacity of few that
9 can influence government power for their own self-interest.

10 The cynicism, it abounds. It abounds in central
11 Brooklyn, in Harlem. It abounds in The Bronx. It abounds
12 in southeast Queens, and there is this notion that City Hall
13 is for sale and that these lovely halls are nothing more
14 than our auction hall, an auction block, and that the voices
15 of the powerless that we all represent, that they are being
16 ignored, 89 percent of the electorate that seeks to have
17 their voices heard.

18 Mr. Mayor, I think your words said it best on
19 August 20, 2007, and let me remind you, "I believe it is
20 simply inappropriate for those members elected in 1997, who
21 were aware of the rules under which they were elected, to
22 seek to change those rules in a manner that may work to
23 their own advantage." At a time of excessive cynicism about
24 so many of our institutions, I believe that elected
25 officials should seek every opportunity to maintain and

1 enhance the trust of the citizens.

2 Certainly, Mr. Mayor, you have a right to change
3 your mind, but I don't believe you should change your mind
4 on such a fundamental right. I believe, Mr. Mayor, you
5 should trust the voters, and I believe that should be your
6 legacy. Trust the voters to do the right thing and let them
7 decide. Is now an opportunity? We do have time. After I
8 have spoken to a number of experts who have served on
9 Charter Revision Commissions, they indicate to me that a
10 referendum is timely and that we could get this done.

11 I would hope that you would listen to the voice of
12 the people and let the people decide and veto this bill.
13 Thank you.

14 MAYOR BLOOMBERG: Thank you.

15 Bill de Blasio, do you want to speak?

16 COUNCIL MEMBER DE BLASIO: Yes.

17 MAYOR BLOOMBERG: What we've said, we're trying
18 to limit everybody to two minutes. I did let the City
19 Council people go on a little bit longer.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER DE BLASIO: Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

21 Mr. Mayor, I have had the opportunity in these
22 last weeks to talk to literally hundreds and hundreds of New
23 Yorkers across this City, and their voice is very, very
24 clear, it's not that they don't respect you and appreciate
25 the work you've done. I think that's something that many of

1 us feel. It's that they feel they're not being heard. They
2 said they feel they made their will clear over the years and
3 they want you to respect that. They want you to hear it.

4 From the beginning, it's been clear, we had an
5 opportunity to resolve the issue of term limits in the ideal
6 fashion, which would have been through a Charter Revision
7 Commission this year, and an item on the ballot for
8 tomorrow's election. That opportunity was not taken. We
9 still have a very clear opportunity to move forward with a
10 referendum for this spring. To say the least, that would
11 require you not signing this bill and allowing us to go on
12 that path.

13 Mr. Mayor, we have consulted with the people who
14 helped to put together the current Charter, the folks who
15 were there at the creation, with Richard Emery, for example,
16 who brought the lawsuit that ended the Board of Estimate and
17 led to our current form of government. There's broad
18 agreement, we can have a referendum this spring. There's
19 time to do it properly and that referendum, given this
20 massive debate we've had here in this City, would be voted
21 on by hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers, and it would be
22 represented and it would be democratic and there would be
23 time for all the proper processing and approvals.

24 To act without the people undermines faith in
25 government. You have, to your credit, taken many actions

1 over the years which were meant to show people that
2 government could work, and I commend you for that, but to
3 ignore such a clear desire on the part of the people, it
4 simply doesn't jive with what I understand to be your
5 approach, and I think the people, not just through the
6 public polling but through all the interactions all of us
7 have had over these weeks in our communities, the people
8 feel that something unprecedented is happening. They feel
9 that something has been taken away from them. There is an
10 anger and a frustration.

11 You know, I would say, and I'll conclude quickly,
12 that unfortunately, over the years, the citizens have not
13 been given the greatest reason to have faith in government,
14 at any level, but hopefully it's gotten a little better in
15 recent years. Hopefully, what you've done has been a part
16 of it; what we've done has been a part of it. But that
17 faith has been shaken in these last weeks. There is a sense
18 again of something being taken away; of something that was
19 expected, that the people's will would be respected, now
20 being taken away.

21 Mr. Mayor, I appeal to you not to sign this
22 legislation; to let the people decide this matter once and
23 for all. Thank you.

24 MAYOR BLOOMBERG: Thank you.

25 THE CLERK: The next speaker will be Congressman

1 Anthony Weiner.

2 (Pause.)

3 CONGRESSMAN WEINER: Good morning, Mr. Mayor, my
4 colleagues in government; thank you very much for holding
5 this hearing. I want to thank you and I also want to thank
6 the many citizens of New York who have engaged in this
7 debate, who lined up to speak at Council hearings, who are
8 lined up right outside this room, filling up the rotunda,
9 who have written dozens of letters to Letters to the Editor,
10 who have spoken out, signed on to websites and the like.

11 Mr. Mayor, it should be no surprise that this has
12 generated so much passion. This is a debate that is really
13 not about term limits, it's not about you, it's certainly
14 not about me, but this is about the very foundation of how
15 we do things here in New York City. This is about our right
16 to vote. This is about the way we solve big issues in our
17 City and the way we're going to be able to deal with them in
18 the future.

19 This is, at the very fundamental level, as has
20 been said again and again, about whether or not we are going
21 to honor the votes of New Yorkers. You know, New Yorkers
22 don't engage in referenda very often; they do it sparingly,
23 and when they do it, frankly, it should be respected. I
24 think that voters do have a sense, and when you look at the
25 poles that say 90 percent say that no matter how we feel

1 about term limits, we believe that this process is simply
2 not right because it takes away the fundamental right to
3 vote, that should not be lost. The irony of us being here
4 today in a packed City Hall, on a bill that would take away
5 the right to vote, on the day before tens of millions of
6 Americans are going to work very hard to get to the poles
7 and stay on long lines to do so, should not be lost on any
8 of us.

9 It's also about how we make these types of
10 decisions. It is hard, as a New Yorker, Mr. Mayor, not to
11 be embarrassed on behalf of our government about the way
12 this decision has been made. We had one day of hearings for
13 the public, in which, really, the first four hours were for
14 elected officials and representatives of the administration.
15 We had it one borough. The follow-up hearing was arguably
16 at the smallest hearing room maybe in all of democracy,
17 rather than having hearings in all five boroughs, rather
18 than doing this over days and weeks and months. We've done
19 it, frankly, in the worst possible way.

20 The third element of this that shouldn't be lost,
21 and this is the one I want to appeal to you directly on: Mr.
22 Mayor, I, like you, I love this City. I want us to work
23 very hard to solve the problems that we have. I want us to
24 work together to do it. There'll be plenty of time for
25 elections later on, and I want you to be successful. I want

1 this City Council to be successful. Elections, voters
2 casting their votes, is the foundation upon which all of us
3 has the legitimacy that allows us to do our work. We are
4 going to have to all pull together and lead New Yorkers in
5 the months to come, and this, unfortunately, is going to
6 make us all less able to do it. You have shown in the past
7 that sometimes you listen to these hearings very carefully
8 and you've decided, as the case of the petty cab hearings,
9 not to sign the bill and to eventually veto it.

10 You said you didn't listen to the testimony at the
11 City Council; well, now you're going to have a chance, and I
12 honor you for sitting here and listening. And what we can
13 do is the thing that your corporation counsel said we can
14 do, and that is to have a referendum to put this on the
15 ballot. One final thought, Mr. Mayor, you have said again
16 and again, this is about additional choice. I think New
17 Yorkers not only want a choice in November of 2009, they
18 want a choice and a vote on this issue today.

19 Thank you for your attention.

20 THE CLERK: Mr. Danny Shapiro, followed by Mr.
21 Rafael Martinez.

22 MR. SHAPIRO: Mr. Mayor, I'm here today to voice
23 my opposition to Bill 845. Your push to change the term-
24 limits law through legislation, your blatant disregard for
25 earlier referendums, and your clear conflict of interest

1 makes this the absolute worst way to handle such an
2 important governance issue.

3 You failed to engage the public in any meaningful
4 debate or discussion. Instead, working with the City
5 Council to pass this bill within only two weeks of its
6 introduction, the back-to-back marathon City Council
7 hearings were a circus and inaccessible to most New Yorkers.
8 Hundreds of people were either turned away, due to capacity
9 constraints, or could not attend or waited all night to
10 testify, due to work and family obligations. You've ignored
11 us, instead speaking only with those who are either
12 influential or with whom you have influence.

13 You say you want to give voters more choice but
14 not the choice of whether they want to keep term limits as
15 is. You claim to be the best steward of our City's fiscal
16 health, but you have failed to control pension and health-
17 care costs that are choking our City's budget and have
18 allowed City spending to increase well beyond our means.
19 You have lofty goals for New York, but not at the expense of
20 our democracy.

21 We have high standards for our Mayor and deserve a
22 public servant that will actually listen to our concerns. I
23 fear your actions over the past few weeks will not only
24 increase cynicism in government, but also severely tarnish
25 your legacy and reputation as mayor. Mr. Mayor, I am angry

1 and so disappointed with you. If you truly care about our
2 City and respect its people, you will not sign this bill.

3 Thank you.

4 THE CLERK: Mr. Martinez followed by

5 MR. MARTINEZ: I come here as a New Yorker, Mr.
6 Mayor. The voters in the years 1993 and 1996 in this City,
7 in a referendum, they vote the elected officials, both the
8 Council, the Citywide offices and the voter precedent that
9 they should not serve more than eight years. By the action
10 of this City Council and your approval, you have made this
11 great City look to the rest of the world worse than the
12 Banana Republic.

13 Mr. Mayor, even today, you have an opportunity to
14 eradicate the stain that will be forever on your mayoralty.
15 During your tenure as executive of the City, you had
16 accomplished a lot, much more than the previous Mayor. My
17 humble opinion is that one of your mayoral accomplishments
18 is that when you took the oath of office for this City, New
19 York was extremely divided along ethnic and racial lines.
20 You created a different mood in the City. Today New Yorkers
21 are getting along, getting along much better than they have
22 in a very long time. Now, that is not to say that there are
23 not bigots among us.

24 In ancient times, I must point out, history tells
25 us that a profit walked the streets of Jerusalem naked.

1 He's naked, and we all symbolize the nakedness or the
2 politics of those days. Can you imagine 90 percent of New
3 Yorkers who want a referendum on term limits walking the
4 City streets naked? That is the portrait of you and the 29
5 Council members who vote to support this attention.

6 Please, Mr. Mayor, do a service to the millions of
7 New Yorkers with us now and those yet to be born; do the
8 right thing and veto this anti-democratic legislation.

9 Thank you.

10 THE CLERK: Blakely, followed by Council
11 Member

12 MS. BLAKELY: Good morning, Mr. Mayor, and to the
13 City Council. In the spirit of my ancestors, I come before
14 you.

15 I ask, Mr. Mayor, do not disrespect me or
16 embarrass me. I knew you as Uncle Mike. I had a great deal
17 of respect for you. You wrote me and sent several letters
18 to my home asking me to support you as the Mayor; I did.
19 The second time I also supported you. I respect your work
20 with the children and youth, revising the Board of
21 Education. I respect what your mother told me about you.
22 Please do not disrespect me by not allowing me to vote for
23 you, a human rights' issue.

24 Mr. Mayor, you Can come and work with me in
25 affordable housing. You could step down but we still want

1 you to be involved with the City. I'm losing my home after
2 30 years and I know that you want to do the right thing.
3 Come and work with me. I only receive one dollar for the
4 last forty years to fifty years. I was a Roman Catholic Nun
5 for ten of those years, so I understand the one dollar a
6 year. I say to you, Mr. Mayor, and I plead to you
7 personally, only God can rule forever; only God is forever,
8 and I thank you for allowing me to come before you as one of
9 the citizens of New York City and representing many.

10 Thank you.

11 THE CLERK: Council Woman Mendez, Tom

12 MAYOR BLOOMBERG: Council Woman, what we've done
13 is let the City Council people go a little bit longer than
14 two minutes, but roughly.

15 COUNCIL WOMAN MENDEZ: I will keep my comments
16 short.

17 Good morning, Mr. Mayor, my colleagues. I voted
18 against this bill and I am against term limits. While term
19 limits are undemocratic, I believe that we don't extend it
20 or change it by another undemocratic method.

21 Mr. Mayor, many of my constituents have called or
22 written to me. They want to vote for you again, but they
23 want to go in and vote on this issue first. As for me, as
24 an activist who for 20 years have been registering voters in
25 Williamsburgh, the community I was born and raised in, and

1 now, on the Lower East Side, it becomes very difficult for
2 me to go back to my constituents, particularly the Latinos
3 who I have been telling for years, "Your vote is important,
4 your vote counts, register to vote," and then, by one day,
5 making a vote that will nullify their vote.

6 I believe we could change term limits through a
7 voter referendum. I think that is the preferred way, and my
8 constituents have called me and have been loud and clear on
9 this issue. Thank you very much.

10 THE CLERK: Mr. Molloy.

11 MR. MOLLOY: Mr. Mayor, I am in favor of
12 extending term limits. I believe there are four important
13 issues confronting this great City: One is the economy;
14 second is affordable housing; third is economic development;
15 and the fourth one is the continued construction of the
16 existing school system.

17 I believe Mayor Bloomberg is the right person at
18 the right time to address these important issues. I hope
19 that people the people of New York City recognize his
20 capabilities and his integrity. I believe that Mayor
21 Bloomberg has done an excellent job in his prior two terms
22 and I ask that this City elect him to a third term.

23 Thank you.

24 THE CLERK: Gary Labarbara, followed by
25 (inaudible).

1 MR. LABARBARA: Good morning, Mr. Mayor, City
2 Council Members, my name is Gary Labarbara. I am hear on
3 behalf of Teamsters Local 282 and many other Teamsters,
4 thousands of Teamsters that both live and work in New York
5 City.

6 I am here in support of you signing this bill. I
7 would like to point out, Mr. Mayor, I believe that you and
8 City Council have done an outstanding job in the last seven
9 years, that this bill does not only include the position of
10 Mayor, it's City Council as well as Borough Presidents,
11 Comptroller, and I think that needs to be pointed out.

12 I don't see this as a self-serving bill as I have
13 heard and read. I believe that we are in an unprecedented
14 economic times. I believe that through your leadership this
15 City has moved forward and would continue to move forward.
16 I would like to also point out that what this does is give
17 the residents of the City of New York a broader opportunity
18 and more choice in 2009. So, therefore, I am in strong
19 support of you signing this bill and I would like to
20 acknowledge the courage and leadership of the City Council
21 as the representative body of their constituents in
22 approving this bill.

23 Thank you very much for your time and attention.
24 Thank you.

25 VOICE: Good morning, Mr. Mayor, members of City

1 Council, Ladies and Gentlemen. I am here today, I represent
2 11,000 New York City Police Sergeants and I am here to
3 encourage you to sign the bill.

4 I have read a lot, listened to a lot over the past
5 couple of weeks as to the way the process has been done and
6 I think you are giving an opportunity, once you sign this
7 bill. They have an option to either elect you again for
8 Mayor or anyone that chooses to run for Mayor at this point
9 in time. I also think that it should be noted that in New
10 York State, very few places have term limits, going right up
11 to the Governor's office. The options remain on the table.
12 I think that the people continue to have options and I
13 encourage you on behalf of all of my members to sign this
14 bill.

15 Thank you.

16 THE CLERK: Next, Mr. George Garcia, followed by
17 Henry Stern.

18 MR. GARCIA: Today mentioned in The New York
19 Times is the death of 13 more American soldiers, bringing
20 the count to forty-four hundred thirty thousand wounded and
21 one hundred thousand Iraqis dead, also at a cost of over a
22 trillion dollars. You might say, what does this have to do
23 with our meeting here today in these chambers? Because the
24 government in Washington, in the name of democracy,
25 disregarded the feelings of our citizens.

1 I am not suggesting a parallel nor am I suggesting
2 a catastrophe. I am suggesting that democracy and the
3 rights of our citizens of New York, that twice voted
4 extending term limits, be heard, listened to, and be
5 approved. To ignore the people's decision is to threaten
6 their confidence in the power of their vote.

7 Mr. Mayor, I am not afraid of our City should
8 there be a new Mayor, because you have built the best
9 mayoralty office in the history of New York, and this will
10 protect us for the future. Mr. Mayor, we are thankful and
11 grateful for all you have done for our great City. Go on to
12 new and greater challenges, Mr. Mayor. Let go.

13 Thank you.

14 THE CLERK: Henry Stern.

15 MR. STERN: Thank you. This is the least public
16 public hearing that I've ever attended because the great
17 majority of the people who want to testify and want to watch
18 are necessarily excluded because of the size of the room. I
19 believe that to make it a true public hearing, it should
20 have been held in the Council Chamber, or if not, at One
21 Police Plaza, because there are hundreds of people who have
22 been outside since 9:00 and we're being admitted one by one,
23 as if we were prisoners who had to be searched and
24 qualified.

25 I think I will start by saying that I think the

1 Mayor has been a very good Mayor. This Mayor has
2 accomplished a great deal for the City at some personal
3 sacrifice and my opposition to this bill has nothing to do
4 with my feelings about the regime, which is essentially
5 benevolent. These are good times for the City, and if you
6 don't believe me, wait until the bad times come. However,
7 even hard cases make bad law and even a good Mayor, a noble
8 Mayor, cannot supersede or contravene democracy just because
9 there may be a legal loophole in the City Charter.

10 Democracy is more important than any person, and
11 that's the thing we're here to try to maintain. The intent
12 of the City Charter was to give the Council free reign to
13 amend the charter with certain exceptions. Those exceptions
14 dealt with the elective process. They dealt with the
15 relationship with the Mayor. There are certain areas which
16 are listed as sacred and immune to tampering. For example,
17 they cannot change the length of their terms by law.
18 However, there is nothing in the Charter about term limits,
19 because term limits hadn't been thought of in 1989 when it
20 was adopted. So because of their oversight, people seek to
21 go through the hole. There is nothing in the Charter about
22 airplanes and there is nothing about time travel, but they
23 would be applied realistically.

24 We're done, okay. I've left out a great deal,
25 but if you want to know how I feel, I've written extensively

1 on this on my website, which is nycivic.org, and linked to
2 other sources and so on. I really feel that this is an
3 issue of basic liberty and democracy and that that's
4 something which is priceless, and I hope the good Mayor can
5 find another way to be eligible for a third term, because
6 LaGuardia, Wagner and Koch have had a third term and you may
7 deserve to be in that pantheon, just not this way.

8 Thank you.

9 THE CLERK: Mr. Rothblatt, followed by Cathy
10 Loughlin.

11 MR. ROTHBLATT: Hello, Mr. Mayor. Thank you for
12 giving me the opportunity to speak.

13 Your website says you want to give people a
14 choice, and yet, when they were given the choice, you
15 annulled it. I'm not sure if it was you or somebody, one of
16 your supporters who said that people like to emote at these
17 hearings, so you didn't listen to the testimony. People
18 will emote if you annul their vote. You're going to find
19 that people are not, I am not going to forget this vote.
20 I'm involved in many civic organizations of various
21 political stripes, and everybody is really quite angry at
22 this.

23 You have a chance, you don't have to go through
24 with this. If you were really concerned about your career,
25 about what you can do for this country, you are going to

1 alienate people and get people very angry. This is a
2 disorganized crowd. I've been talking to all sorts of
3 people in the group, all sorts of different opinions.
4 Nobody brought us here. Nobody organized us. We're
5 genuinely angry at this, and if you want to govern
6 effectively, this is your chance to listen to that and
7 realize that you are making a mistake here.

8 I gave you a book, did you read it, about Duffield
9 Street? I gave it to you do you know about the Duffield
10 Street homes? Because this is an example of an
11 abolitionist's probably underground railroad site in
12 downtown Brooklyn that the owner wanted to turn it into a
13 museum; you wanted to turn it into an underground parking
14 lot. We took a couple of years to fight for this thing and
15 eventually we won, but I had the feeling throughout the
16 entire thing that you did not listen. I think it's your
17 chance to actually start listening.

18 So, thank you.

19 THE CLERK: Cathy Wiles, followed by

20 MS. WILES: Good morning. Cathy Wiles with the
21 Partnership for New York City. I want to say that at the
22 time when the City is facing probably the biggest economic
23 and financial challenge in its history, that it is important
24 that we have the strongest possible City government and
25 leadership. The act by the City Council to provide for the

1 extension of term limits is an important step in that
2 direction.

3 We have weakened with term limits. We have
4 weakened our representative form of government. We have
5 turned a career in public service into a game of musical
6 chairs. It is appropriate and timely that this bill be
7 executed. We cannot have term limits during a period when
8 we need strong and continuous leadership in City government.

9 Thank you.

10 THE CLERK: Lieutenant Bowls, followed by
11 (inaudible) Greenfield.

12 LT. BOWLS: Good morning. My name is Lieutenant
13 Edward Bowls. I am speaking on speaking on behalf of Jack
14 MacDonald, President of Uniform Fire Officers Association
15 and Leaders of the Bravest.

16 Though I am allowed two minutes under the rules of
17 today, it won't take the Fire Officers' Union that long to
18 say what we believe should be the obvious to anyone who
19 lives in New York City.

20 Our City is in big fiscal trouble, along with the
21 State and the nation. We are going to need smart,
22 experienced, dependable people to lead us through the
23 crisis, just like the current administration took us through
24 the crisis after 9-11. When this third-term bill is signed
25 into law today, all we will do is give the voters an

1 opportunity to vote for the best and brightest candidates
2 next November. The election day choices will still be there
3 for all the voters of New York City, and that's the way it
4 should be.

5 Just one more word or two, if I may: The Uniform
6 Fire Officers' Association never thought term limits was a
7 good idea. We are pleased the City Council has amended the
8 law and the UFOA urges the Mayor to sign it just in time to
9 deal with what could become New York City's worst financial
10 crisis in seven years.

11 Thank you for the opportunity to speak on this
12 important legislation.

13 THE CLERK: David Greenfield.

14 MR. GREENFIELD: Good morning. My name is David
15 Greenfield. Over the past year I've spent hundreds of hours
16 campaigning for what was to be an open seat for New York
17 City Council. I attended dozens of community events,
18 knocked on hundreds of doors and raised more money from more
19 people than any other candidate for City Council in New
20 York. I even lined up endorsements from half a dozen key
21 political leaders in the City Council, State Assembly, and
22 State Senate. It's safe to say that I am one of a very
23 small group of New Yorkers whose careers are directly
24 impacted by the term-limit extension.

25 Despite that, I am proud to stand here today in

1 continuation of my support of legislation extending term
2 limits from two terms to three. It's my simple belief that
3 public service is about doing what's best for the public.
4 In these perilous economic times, New Yorkers deserve the
5 opportunity to have consistent leadership in their
6 government. The Mayor and City Council have proved
7 themselves to be outstanding stewards of our City's 59
8 billion dollar budget and it's in our interest, as New
9 Yorkers, to allow them the opportunity to continue to do so.

10 Let there be no doubt, I'd rather be running what
11 I believe to be a successful race for City Council this year
12 than waiting another four years to advance my political
13 career. However, it's times like these when we must all put
14 our personal interests aside in the interest of the
15 collective good. I'm not worried about me. God willing,
16 I'll be fine. I'm worried about the thousands of people in
17 my community whose food stamps no longer cover the very
18 basics of food. I'm worried about the hundreds of people in
19 my community who are losing their homes, and I'm worried
20 most about the too many people who have called me recently,
21 with pain in their voices, asking for help in finding new
22 jobs. It's because of those people that I gladly make this
23 personal sacrifice.

24 I thank the Mayor for his leadership, and
25 encourage him to sign this legislation into law so that we

1 can move on and continue to work for those many New Yorkers
2 who so desperately need our help.

3 Thank you very much.

4 THE CLERK: Mr. Robert Johnson, followed by Ms.
5 Rachel

6 MR. JOHNSON: My name is Robert Johnson, and I
7 live in Sunnyside, Queens. I am here today, Mayor
8 Bloomberg, to urge you not to sign the bill that ignores the
9 voice of the people of New York City.

10 Just like some people and charities that have
11 testified in support of your power grab, my remarks today
12 also are for sale. Three years ago you chose to eliminate
13 prescription drug benefits from retired, disabled New York
14 City managers. My partner is one of those disabled
15 retirees. Your stripping of benefits from the disabled now
16 costs my partner approximately \$6,000 a year for life-saving
17 medications, which is almost thirty percent of his City
18 pension.

19 We contacted Speaker Quinn about your actions, and
20 just like you and your office, she did nothing. Apparently
21 she also is in support of cutting prescription drug benefits
22 from disabled management retirees. Is that the kind of
23 policy that you think New Yorkers can't live without?

24 Even though your actions, Mayor Bloomberg, have
25 made it clear that you do not care about the voice off the

1 people of New York City, for a mere \$18,000 and \$6,000 for
2 the remainder of your reign, I am happy to retract my
3 statement and support your power grab. Thank you.

4 THE CLERK: Ms. Trachtenberg, followed by David

5 MS. TRACHTENBERG: Hi. My name is Rachel
6 Trachtenberg, and since you were not here at the last
7 hearing, I am going to repeat some of what I said. I waited
8 seven hours also at the last one to testify.

9 First, my family and I lost our home in the East
10 Village because you thought it was more important to give
11 our taxes to the rich Yankees baseball team than build
12 affordable housing for New York, the public. You support
13 landlords over tenants, which I think is wrong.

14 I may not be able to vote yet, but I know for a
15 fact that what you are doing is wrong. In the recent past,
16 the people have already voted against this bill twice. So,
17 quite frankly, Mayor Bloomberg, you're cheating, which does
18 not make a good example for the youth of New York City and
19 the whole world.

20 So, Mayor Bloomberg, will you please not sign this
21 bill and, for once, give democracy a chance. Thank you very
22 much.

23 THE CLERK: Ms. Monroy, followed by Jason
24 Trachtenberg.

25 MR. MONROY: Hi, my name is David Monroy. We

1 have heard what Robert and Rachel have to say, so I will
2 make this short.

3 Michael Bloomberg has shown us his true colors and
4 contempt for the democratic process by striking deals behind
5 closed doors with City Council in order to buy out their
6 votes. The citizens of New York want and deserve the right
7 to vote on term limits, it's the law.

8 So, Mr. Mayor, if you are the honorable man people
9 say you are, you will let the public decide and uphold the
10 true spirit of democracy. The last thing we need is a bunch
11 of fascists running the country; however, I believe that's
12 been the case for a while.

13 Thank you.

14 THE CLERK: Mr. Trachtenberg, followed by Daniel
15

16 MR. TRACHTENBERG: Good afternoon. I just got
17 back from the Marathon, so excuse my breath.

18 Railroading used to be a term reserved for train
19 riders; bulldozing is a term used for work crews; ground
20 breaking is a term reserved for construction workers; and
21 ribbon cutting is a term reserved for the Mayor, except when
22 you have railroaded, bulldozed your bloated and loaded
23 intentions against the determinations of we, the people, to
24 terminate, exterminate, eliminate cheating, deceiving. Live
25 by your own rules, but do not make new rules for your own

1 benefit -- I wish I could do that. You don't even know what
2 I would do. We'd have a good time - which we are forced to
3 live with. The people have spoken.

4 Thank you.

5 THE CLERK: Danny Lucarelli.

6 MR. LUCARELLI: Good morning. My name is Danny
7 Lucarelli, I represent Plumbers' Local Union Number 1.

8 By extending term limits, New Yorkers will have
9 the choice, more choices in the upcoming November 2009
10 election for Mayor, Comptroller, Public Advocate, Borough
11 President and City Council. Mayor Bloomberg, we are in
12 favor of extending these term limits.

13 Thank you.

14 THE CLERK: Mr. McGuinnes, followed by April

15 MR. MCGUINNES: Good morning, Mr. Mayor, City
16 Council Members, my name is Steve McGuinnes. I represent
17 the New York City District Council of Carpenters, 25,000
18 working men and women.

19 It was always our position that New York City
20 Council and the Mayor's office and the various filled-up
21 positions out there, they're very difficult position and the
22 positions with the previous well, the current until the
23 Mayor signs the bill, the current law will cause a major
24 turnover in the Council, the loss of institutional
25 knowledge.

1 The people did vote for term limits, term limits
2 are still part of this new legislation, but the extension of
3 it, we feel, would benefit not only our members but the
4 people of the City of New York.

5 Thank you very much.

6 THE CLERK: Mr. Bederman.

7 MR. BEDERMAN: Good morning. My name is Abraham
8 Bederman. In the Koch administration, I served as New York
9 City Fire Commissioner and Housing Commissioner. Before
10 that, I was on the staff of the Financial Control Board for
11 the City of New York and a member of the board of the
12 Municipal Assistance Corporation. I was here during the
13 fiscal crisis and saw first hand how important it was to
14 have the right leadership at the right time, because the
15 wrong leadership at that time probably could have meant a
16 City that would have gone under and, instead, we have had a
17 City that has been revitalized and is really a world city,
18 the leading world city, only because we had the right people
19 at the right time to do the right thing when the times were
20 very tough.

21 Well, times are tough again. I don't know if
22 we're going to be as bad they were in the 70's, hopefully
23 not, but certainly New York City, as the financial capital
24 of the world, has to feel the brunt of what's happening, not
25 only in New York but around the world, in terms of the

1 impact off the melt down of the stock market and the general
2 credit squeeze, and we need people who understand what those
3 events are, how to manage them, how to deal with New York,
4 and how to come out ahead, and not to give up.

5 It was in those days that there were powerful
6 advocates who said, "New York City should go bankrupt,"
7 serious advocates, including the Wall Street Journal. If
8 people had listened to them and didn't have the courage and
9 the right leadership at that point, we wouldn't be here
10 today. We wouldn't have this kind of City today. The City
11 would be desolate. We have a great City today because we
12 had the right leaders then. We want to continue to have a
13 great City by having the ability to pick the right leaders
14 again. Everybody can vote for whom they want, but to
15 preclude somebody who has the extraordinary ability and
16 financial background that our current Mayor does would be
17 almost masochistic in this environment.

18 So I think it's for the better of the City of New
19 York, for the people of New York, to give everybody a full
20 choice so that we have the right leadership to deal with
21 these challenging times, and then the people will decide.
22 That's what they're asking to do. They're not taking away
23 anybody's choice; they're letting them decide by giving us
24 the choice to vote for the people who have proven themselves
25 to manage under fiscal stress.

1 Thank you.

2 THE CLERK: Mr. Peter Gleason.

3 MR. GLEASON: Good morning, Mr. Mayor. My name
4 is Peter Gleason. First, I would like to commend you on
5 your great influence, power and wealth. You're a self-made
6 man and an inspiration to many New Yorkers. However, if you
7 sign this bill, it will be tantamount to the little boy
8 playing baseball, losing in the ninth inning, taking his bat
9 and his ball and going home.

10 I urge you not to sign the bill. Bring your bat
11 and your ball back into the game and send this out for a
12 voter referendum. Thank you.

13 THE CLERK: Ms. Omo.

14 MS. OMO: The people of New York have twice voted
15 to end term limits, and I think that their wishes should be
16 respected. That's all I have to say.

17 I think that the City Council had no right to
18 undermine and override what the people of New York City
19 voted to have. That's all.

20 THE CLERK: Ms. Jenkin.

21 MS. JENKIN: Good morning, Mr. Mayor and Council
22 Members.

23 Charming as you are, you are still a Wall Street
24 billionaire mayor, and I expected a lot from you. What you
25 have done, however, is made your rich friends much richer

1 using our tax money. You've arranged for City properties to
2 be sold in sweetheart deals to developers and given them
3 massive tax breaks, while our City's infrastructure and
4 transportation systems are falling apart, ugly high-rise
5 buildings have sprung up all around us, destroying
6 neighborhoods and local small businesses. Streets choked
7 with construction materials have created congestion, noise,
8 pollution, and danger like never before. Run-away building
9 without proper oversight or restriction has cost the lives
10 of 25 workers this year alone. It's also killing our
11 quality of life.

12 Over the last decade we've lost over three hundred
13 thousand rent stabilized apartments. During your two terms
14 as Mayor, you've never once stood up for renters. By doing
15 away with affordable rentals, you also cut the flow of
16 creative people who have always come to New York to
17 contribute to the life and energy of the theater and all the
18 arts. New York's great cultural institutions make this City
19 unique and special. They draw people from all over the
20 world.

21 Mayor Bloomberg, you could have created thousands
22 of good, permanent jobs, taking care of some of the needs of
23 this City that are most pressing. You did not. Have you
24 built any affordable housing, schools, theaters, lobbies,
25 playgrounds, or parks, libraries, playgrounds or parks? Not

1 in Manhattan. Why would it have been okay to give away
2 three hundred million dollars of City money to build the
3 West Side Stadium but not to expand daycare, raise pay for
4 cops or teachers and fix our transit system. It's both
5 arrogant and disrespectful to ignore the real needs of
6 ordinary people, family and seniors who have made this City.

7 We need a Mayor who gives top priority to these
8 needs. We do not need a Mayor who uses his position to
9 pursue his personal goals. Thank you.

10 THE CLERK: Mr. Haber, followed by Jimmy

11 MR. HABER: Good morning. Mr. Mayor, you and the
12 Speaker Quinn, together with 22 Council Members owe your
13 offices to vacancies created by the public and who twice
14 voted referendums to term limits. Notwithstanding your
15 strong support at the time for term limits, you have now
16 orchestrated to overturn the will of the public and extended
17 all of your terms. Concerned that the public would have
18 supported term limits in a third referendum, you
19 intentionally waited until it was too late to place a
20 referendum on the November ballot and hid the fact that it
21 could have been set after November and well before the
22 expiration of your terms at the end of 2009.

23 In an unprecedented time of one week, you scripted
24 a so-called public hearing, and within a matter of days a
25 Council vote that was predetermined and rigged to assure a

1 coup d'etat. The hearing was a meaningless charade and your
2 claim that the process was democratic is unacceptable
3 because a rigged vote is the antithesis of democracy. What
4 is odious about the affair is the phony claim, actually a
5 lie, that the hearing and the vote had to be moved quickly
6 because the current economic crisis required your alleged
7 financial expertise, forgetting you would, in any case,
8 remain in office until the end of 2009. Notwithstanding
9 your Wall Street background, you were as unknowing as the
10 rest of us about the impending Wall Street implosion and
11 ensuing crisis and the claim that you and you alone, to the
12 exclusion of all others, will rescue the City, is nonsense.
13 The crisis is world wide and will be resolved, if at all, by
14 intentional governments not by you and not in a matter of a
15 few years.

16 Seeing a third term had nothing to do with an
17 economic crisis, it had to do with your inflated ego and
18 desire to remain in the media limelight, and some Council
19 Members who wanted to remain on the public payroll. They
20 were hesitant to unilaterally initiate an extension of their
21 own terms and you, lacking in any legislative authority and
22 unwilling to call for a referendum, could not seek an
23 extension. So in a marriage of convenience, you and those
24 Council Members manufactured a claim of fear that if action
25 was not taken within one week, New York City would be

1 reduced to the stone age. Mr. Mayor, politics of fear do
2 not speak well of you.

3 It will not escape the public's attention that not
4 only could you have called for a referendum, and lacking
5 that - the bill passed by a slim majority of the Council -
6 could have made it effective after the expiration of the
7 current terms. Self-dealing rejected that option. The
8 bogus claim that in extending term limits you have given
9 voters a choice flies in the face of the fact that voters
10 not once but twice did exercise choice.

11 I'm almost finished.

12 Your manufactured script that this was not being
13 done for your benefit but for the benefit of the public, who
14 did not ask for your Orwellian generosity, is so
15 preposterous, it will be remembered along side that
16 politician who in the early 1900's, when caught doing
17 something wrong, denied it saying all he did was to see his
18 opportunity and he seized it.

19 I'm finished now.

20 Over the course of your life and based upon your
21 opportunistic agenda, in different times you were a
22 Democrat, a Republic and an Independent, in seeking your
23 third term, the unknown is what affiliation you will present
24 to the public. If you wanted to revisit term limits, no one
25 would have complained, but rigging it the way you did was

1 old time, hack politics. I suggest you run as the Hack
2 Party candidate. You were so concerned about giving the
3 public a choice, if you did that, they will have an informed
4 choice of what you stand for and what respect they can
5 expect from you. Thank you.

6 THE CLERK: Mr. McMillen.

7 MR. McMILLEN: I'll take a brief moment to look
8 at you, Mr. Mayor, because I voted for you, and also Kendall
9 Stewart. I will also take this moment to protest and turn
10 my back to you because you turned your back on me and the
11 people. I have no desire to look at you because rent is too
12 damn high in the City of New York.

13 Following the attack on the World Trade Center,
14 there should have been a back-up plan. You failed to
15 provide a back-up plan for the people. You've allowed the
16 landlord to raise the rent eight times since you've been in
17 office, and you want to come here again for another term.
18 We ask that you step aside and let term limits do their job.
19 There's a lot of people here in this City qualified, like
20 myself, Jimmy McMillen, to run for Mayor in '09, which I
21 will run against you; there's no need for you to be here.
22 Your time is up and you must go.

23 If we are to change the presidency and get rid of
24 George Bush, who you are a cousin of according to the DNA
25 test of George Bush; your administration operates like

1 George Bush, and it's time for you to go. If we plan to
2 change leadership at the top, we also must change it in the
3 middle and at the bottom. To change leadership at the top
4 and leave you here is like taking a bath and putting on the
5 same old dirty drawers and the same old dirty socks and
6 sneakers. You're a nice guy, don't get me wrong, I really
7 like the way you look; so did the people when they voted for
8 you the last election, but let's be for real, you're a good
9 looking man, there's something else you can do. You're a
10 rich man.

11 You came here, you didn't want to accept any
12 money. Then you were worth about three billion dollars; now
13 you're worth 45 million dollars. You can't fool Jimmy
14 McMillen, I'm going to run to be my party's chairman, and
15 this man sitting next to you, Kendall Stewart, we've got
16 news for you coming next election, run, we want you to run,
17 but we, the people, are going to run you out. We are going
18 to show you who's the boss.

19 We voted against term limits in '93 and '96; you
20 think it's funny to destroy democracy, but we're going to
21 show you how funny it can get, because I, Jimmy McMillen, am
22 going to be leading the gang with my big mouth, as a Vietnam
23 veteran. All the veterans that are in this City who are
24 homeless, you haven't stood up one moment. The Department
25 of Veterans Affairs have billions of dollars, they owe the

1 City of New York because the City has taken care of these
2 veterans, you could have went out for them, but where is
3 your back-up plan? In order for you to be Mayor of the City
4 of New York, Brooklyn, Bronx, Staten Island, Manhattan and
5 Queens you're looking for the clock, I know you want me to
6 get out of here but in order for you to be Mayor of the
7 City of Brooklyn, Bronx, Staten Island, Manhattan and
8 Queens, you must be the father of the City and protect
9 everyone, look out for every child in your house, and that
10 you haven't done.

11 It's been nice seeing you. I'll see you on
12 Election Day. You've got to go, Brother.

13 THE CLERK: Mr. Puzzo, followed by

14 MR. PUZZO: Yes. I would like to take the time
15 right now to thank Mayor Bloomberg. We're in favor, from
16 Plumbers Local Number 1, building trades, in favor of the
17 term limits. We think it's a great idea that we look at
18 this and give the people of New York a chance to choose from
19 the experienced people that we have in office now.

20 Not only has Mike Bloomberg helped us out with
21 Plumbers Local 1 and all the building trades, he's also made
22 this a safer City. We're moving now, so my members are now
23 safe from work, come to work every day. Thank you.

24 THE CLERK: Agar Joffrey, followed by Frank
25 Massorato.

1 MR. JOFFREY: I start with the name of the Alah,
2 the most merciful and beneficial Mr. Mayor, I represent the
3 Universal Muslim Association of America, American Muslims in
4 Congress, and many mosques, including the one on 96th Street
5 and places of worship in the City of New York. We have by
6 now a total of almost half a million registered voters in
7 this City, and they have sent me to represent them here, as
8 one of the Muslims from the ranks.

9 We are the we may be the new immigrants, Mr.
10 Mayor, and we may speak with an accent, but we are the new
11 citizens of this City and we have as much right to speak out
12 our mind, as well as anybody else. There are people who are
13 cynics and the muck rakers, in the sense that they are too
14 spoiled by all the benefits and the beauty of this society,
15 but we are very gratified and we're grateful to the City
16 Council for permitting this third term, which was extremely,
17 extremely fortunate for all of us to have you come and join
18 us again.

19 You have been to our center and you have been to
20 other centers and you know the plight of the people in terms
21 of health and human services, in terms of other benefits,
22 and especially your stand before the Homeland Security, with
23 respect to these migrant workers that you took and told them
24 that these people are here without any documentation. They
25 may not be the voters, but you took a stand, along with

1 Mayor Giuliani that these people have to be provided health
2 care and they have to have health services. So your bravado
3 and your help and your assistance is greatly appreciated.
4 We are simply happy and a majority of our population, a most
5 tremendous majority, which may be a silent majority, Mr.
6 Mayor, was very happy and very joyous on this extension term
7 and we wish you all the luck.

8 Thank you so much.

9 THE CLERK: Mr. Nacarado.

10 MR. NACARADO: Good morning, Mr. Mayor, Council
11 Members. My name is Frank Nacarado. I'm a community leader
12 and a business person in the Borough of Brooklyn.

13 We believe that I am in favor of extension, term
14 extension. At a time where the economy is in turmoil, at a
15 time where things are uncertain for the future, we need a
16 leader who has experience, who has a proven record, and who
17 is going to take us through these rough waters for the next
18 few years. We feel that we are better off with you in
19 office for the next four years.

20 Thank you.

21 THE CLERK: Mr. Jablin, followed by Susan

22 MR. JABLIN: Thanks for sitting here. This can't
23 be easy for you.

24 You know, my question is, what do I tell my kids?
25 They're so excited about the election tomorrow. They've had

1 mock elections in school and they're enthralled with the
2 idea that one person, in the privacy of a voting booth, can
3 make their voice heard thunderously throughout the whole
4 land. It's thrilling to them. But unfortunately, now, I
5 have to give them Lesson Number 2, which is that every so
6 often a Cesar comes along and tries to muffle that voice.
7 You know, I think actually, Mike, if I can call you that,
8 you ought to be kind of grateful that we have this
9 particular form of government that we do, because there are
10 other places where the electorate, every so often, has to
11 give politicians a vote of confidence, and for some of us,
12 my particular issue is your mishandling of the school
13 overcrowding issue, you wouldn't be allowed even to finish
14 this term.

15 So while I do think that you probably would manage
16 the fiscal crisis more adroitly than whoever might succeed
17 you, I have to ask myself to what tune? Would that be worth
18 a thousand dollars per capita; two thousand dollars per
19 capita? I think democracy is cheap at that price.

20 Thank you.

21 THE CLERK: Susan Lerner.

22 MS. LERNER: Good morning. I'm Susan Lerner.

23 I'm the Executive Director of Common Cause.

24 New York, Gentlemen, the bill before you is really
25 not about term limits, to our mind, it's about whether it's

1 important or not to give the people an opportunity to vote
2 on an issue which they have addressed twice before. The
3 bill says, in essence, that it is not important to our
4 elected officials that the people be able to vote. This is
5 an historic week.

6 All around the country and certainly here in New
7 York City, that's no exception. Record numbers of people
8 have registered to vote. Tomorrow we're expecting a record
9 number of New Yorkers to exercise their basic franchise as
10 citizens and vote in the Federal and State elections.
11 Unfortunately, we expect that our election system is not up
12 to the challenge of large numbers of voters showing up at
13 the poles. The fact that some unknown number of New Yorkers
14 may not have received their absentee ballots in time to cast
15 them, and we know that approximately two hundred thousand
16 late registrations have had to go on to supplemental rolls,
17 we fear it's just the beginning of the dreaded melt down of
18 our antiquated election system.

19 What we're missing at both the City and the State
20 level is an elected official who has made it his or her
21 primary purpose to champion the right of all New Yorkers to
22 be able to vote without long waits, without unnecessary
23 challenges, and with confidence that all the votes will be
24 accurately counted. We had hoped that the Mayor such a
25 champion, but by signing this bill, you significantly

1 undercut your ability to champion the right to vote. You
2 are, unfortunately, sending a message to New Yorkers that
3 the processes of democracy are unimportant to you. To us,
4 the ends in a democracy do not justify the means. What a
5 strange week you have chosen to send the message that voting
6 does not count to you.

7 Thank you.

8 THE CLERK: Mr. Doverin, followed by Michael
9 Rosen.

10 MR. DOVERIN: Good morning, Mayor Bloomberg,
11 Council Members. Term limits were first approved in '93 and
12 reaffirmed in 1997, both times by public referendum, and the
13 terms should only be abolished or extended by direct voter
14 approval.

15 Changing term limits through legislation, without
16 the input of the voters, shows a clear disregard for the
17 will of the people. The issue of term limits must be
18 settled out in the open and by people of New York, not in a
19 back-room deal where special interests are protected instead
20 of working families. Both those in favor and opposed to
21 term limits have legitimate arguments to make, but the
22 chambers of City Hall are the wrong place to make the final
23 decision. Term limits must be decided in a voting booth,
24 where the public has the power to determine what is right
25 and what is wrong for the future of our City.

1 Democracy demands that people have choices and
2 power to decide their own fate and make their own decisions.
3 The issue of term limits should be decided by the voters,
4 not those whose jobs depend on the outcome of that decision.
5 Thank you for your time.

6 THE CLERK: Mr. Rosen, followed by a Michael

7 MR. ROSEN: Mr. Mayor, when they were young, my
8 wife and I drove our children down to Neshoba County,
9 Mississippi, because we wanted them to understand the
10 majesty of this country. Our boys are black, white,
11 Dominican and Puerto Rican. Five of them grew up in new
12 York City public housing before coming to our home. One
13 came through the City's homeless shelter system, all of them
14 through our public schools.

15 We have spoken with our boys for years about the
16 importance of voting. They didn't see the point and we
17 wanted them to, so we drove to Birmingham, Alabama and
18 walked where Sheriff Bull Connor turned a water cannon on
19 black children because they and their parents demanded the
20 unfettered right to vote. We traveled where Andrew Goodman
21 and Michael Schwerner, two young New Yorkers, worked with
22 James Chaney that Freedom Summer in 1964, to register black
23 Americans to vote, because those young men believed the
24 right to vote, the people's voice was so sacred, it could
25 not be taken away; so sacred, they were willing to risk

1 their lives and brutally lost them for the dream of
2 democracy.

3 After we came home and once they turned 18, each
4 of our sons has voted in every election, but after you
5 sponsored this City Council mandate directing Council
6 Members to ignore two voter referenda on term limits, my
7 son, Kindu Jones, an African American whose family still
8 lives in Seward Park Extension Public Housing, asked me why
9 the people's voice no longer mattered in New York. Didn't
10 their vote count? I explained, with fear and sadness, that
11 the creep of totalitarianism starts with the tiptoe of
12 intolerance for the will of the people.

13 Please put down your pen, Mayor Bloomberg, and do
14 not make a mockery of the democracy our country was founded
15 upon, for which two wars were fought on this ground,
16 spilling blood and tragedy to avoid exactly what you are
17 planning to do here today. Please don't make me and
18 countless other parents explain to our children that good
19 men craving power pushed aside the people's voice in self-
20 serving arguments, picking apart the sanctity of democracy
21 for their unbridled ambition for the letter of the law.

22 I'm sorry I spoke too long.

23 THE CLERK: Mr. Razenki, followed by Mr. Siegel.

24 MR. RAZENKI: Mr. Mayor, Gentlemen, I'm against
25 any extension to term limits at all. The people voted

1 twice, in '93 and '96, and whether or not a Council person
2 to the effect that, oh, it was only like 20 or 30 percent of
3 the people - it doesn't matter whether it's 20 or 30
4 percent. What matters is the people showed up. So I'm
5 totally against any extension to the term limit.

6 Mr. Mayor, I'm a native New Yorker. I lived on
7 the upper east side my entire life. I've known every Mayor
8 from Bobby Wagner. I played basketball with John Lindsay's
9 son in Gracie Mansion before security got tight. Basically,
10 I tell you, I have never seen a more arrogant man than you.
11 You have absolutely no regard for the people of New York and
12 I really don't understand your thinking. It's the people
13 that elect and you might think New Yorkers have short
14 memories and with your eighty million dollars you can buy
15 people off, but that's not going to happen. People are
16 going to remember.

17 What you are doing is a disgrace. Thank you.

18 THE CLERK: Mr. Siegel, followed by Moishe

19 MR. SIEGEL: Mr. Mayor, where I grew up in
20 Brooklyn, we were taught that whenever we were critical of
21 someone, we would tell them why we disagreed with them face
22 to face. So this morning, I will respectfully do exactly
23 that.

24 I love New York City. I also love the principles
25 and values associated with a democratic society. By

1 extending term limits by legislative fiat on October 23rd,
2 with the City Council Speaker, along with twenty other
3 members of the City Council, half a dozen who are sitting
4 with you up there today, you all trampled on those precious
5 principles.

6 I and other New Yorkers will not be silent in
7 opposition to your undoing the people's will. It did not
8 have to be this way. You could have and should have used
9 the issue of extending term limits through a public
10 referendum, but you chose not to do that. I believe you
11 made a huge mistake in judgment. You exhibited a disrespect
12 for the will of the people of this great City.

13 You still have an opportunity to reevaluate your
14 approach by not signing the legislation before you and
15 supporting a public referendum on this issue. The question
16 of whether New York City Council can override two public
17 referenda on term limits is an open legal one under the
18 First and Fourteenth Amendment to the United States
19 Constitution, the New York City Charter, and the New York
20 Municipal Home Rule. The Council's vote on October 23rd
21 will not go unchallenged. Your counsel said at the hearings
22 that the legal issue was crystal clear. I respectfully
23 disagree with that and the courts will decide this issue
24 eventually.

25 Mr. Mayor, I know you care about your legacy.

1 Your recent actions and what I fear you are going to do
2 today by extending term limits by legislative action, will
3 tarnish that legacy. History does not treat people who go
4 back on their word kindly. There is an alternative, it's
5 called the public referendum. It's the people's will, it's
6 called democracy. Thank you.

7 THE CLERK: Mr. Malamud, followed by Rachel
8 Gomez.

9 MR. MALAMUD: Good morning. My name is Moshe
10 Malamud. I am a resident of Crown Heights, Brooklyn, and a
11 business leader with several hundred people in my employ. I
12 am here today, Mr. Bloomberg, to urge you to sign 845A into
13 law.

14 Under your leadership and the leadership of the
15 City Council, my community has prospered and had great
16 strides in community relationships. We all know what
17 happened in the summer of 1991 in my neighborhood, and we
18 feel safe today under your leadership, and feel that we've
19 made significant progress in community relationships. I, as
20 a voter, want the choice to vote for the current leadership.
21 Those who oppose it have the opportunity to vote against it.
22 However, the choice should be ours. This legislation adds
23 choices to the people of our great City.

24 As we consider the tough economic times that we,
25 as a nation and as a City face, we need a proven leader with

1 experience to guide us. Mr. Bloomberg, you have that
2 experience and you have proven yourself as a man of high
3 integrity who has served all the people of this great City
4 with great honor. We, as New Yorkers, should all be
5 grateful for your willingness to serve us yet another term.

6 Thank you very much.

7 THE CLERK: Reverend Williams.

8 REV. WILLIAMS: Good morning. My name is
9 Reverend Reginald Williams and I am Chairman of the Human
10 Economic Development Commission for the United Missionary
11 Baptist Association, which currently has membership of over
12 one hundred and fifty Baptist churches, primarily in
13 Manhattan.

14 I've come to urge the Mayor to sign the bill 845A.
15 It's been said that whatever you would tolerate, you will
16 not change. In this economic crisis that we're in, and our
17 future is unknown, we think it's best to have a continuation
18 of a proven leadership that we've had for the last eight
19 years. We believe that the Charter gives and gave the
20 Council the right to legislate this legislation. We are
21 fearful of the consequences of having a large number of
22 neophytes, incoming freshmen coming into the City, number
23 one, which would take them approximately a year or a year-
24 and-a-half to learn the inner workings of government; and
25 then, secondly, who might feel that they're not bound by the

1 many obligations and negotiations that have already taken
2 place, the commitments and promises made and, therefore, it
3 would further our uncertainty of the future.

4 We have a proven partnership with the Council and
5 Mayor Bloomberg and we hope that you will sign this into
6 legislation, continue the work that you've been doing, and
7 that New Yorkers will benefit from knowing that we have a
8 steady hand at the helm and we have proven leadership, both
9 at the Mayoral position and in the Council, to help us
10 through these uncharted waters, and just be assured that
11 you are in our prayers, in our thoughts, and that we will
12 also work with you in any possible way we can make this
13 happen.

14 Thank you very much and God bless.

15 THE CLERK: Mr. Tye, followed by Jean

16 MR. TYE: Good morning, Ladies and Gentlemen. My
17 name is Gary Tye, representing the Chinese Consolidated
18 Benevolent Association of New York. We have thousands of
19 Chinese Americans as our members.

20 On behalf of the CCBA and the majority of Chinese
21 Americans living in New York City, we would like to express
22 our strong desire to support the extension bill. The bill
23 has been passed by the City Council. We believe that the
24 bill passed by our elected officials represents our voice as
25 the people of New York City, for the benefit of New York

1 City. We also see the leadership of Mayor Bloomberg and
2 other elected officials whose term is ending next year and
3 their experience is very important to New York City. That's
4 why we urge Mayor Bloomberg to sign the bill today and thank
5 you very much.

6 THE CLERK: Mr. Rushenal.

7 MR. RUSHENAL: Now, for something completely
8 different. Good morning, Mr. Mayor and Council Members. My
9 name is Gene Rushenal. I'm with the New York Public
10 Interest Research Group.

11 Mayor Bloomberg, I think this bill raises some
12 very serious questions for you, such as how do you restore
13 confidence in City government when eighty nine percent of
14 the public wants to vote on a referendum on term limits and
15 is unhappy with City Council's self-interested vote. What
16 do you say, Mr. Bloomberg, to the millions of people who
17 admire and respect you, who are now scratching their heads
18 and wondering why you are behaving in ways that would make
19 Boss Tweed blush with embarrassment.

20 No one really knows your political future or any
21 of your political future for sure, and no one knows how the
22 litigation that we and others will bring will turn out, but
23 I'll tell you, one thing I do know which is that history
24 will very harshly judge you for using and abusing your
25 governmental powers to further your political career.

1 Thank you.

2 THE CLERK: Cristabell Goff, followed by Eric
3 Sneider.

4 MS. Goff: Good morning, Mr. Mayor, I am
5 Cristabell Goff. I am a voter from Greenwich Village. I
6 was born in 1938 and I've recently been reading this book by
7 Naomi Wolff, The End of America, and I would like to quote a
8 few words from it. She points out that contrary to what
9 many people think, historically two well-known twentieth
10 century European dictators did not come to power through
11 violence, quote: "Each came to power legally through a
12 working democracy. Each made use of the parliamentary
13 system itself to subvert the rule of law. Both leaders made
14 the case that democratic processes could weaken the nation
15 in time of crisis."

16 Now, it's me, I think it is not true that the
17 democratic process should be set aside in time of crisis. I
18 believe this should have gone to a referendum. I understand
19 some people speculate that people will forget this, but I
20 don't think so.

21 THE CLERK: Mr. Sneider, followed by

22 MR. SNEIDER: Mr. Mayor, good morning. For me,
23 the bill was never about the pros and cons of either term
24 limits or your leadership skills. In two referendums, over
25 one million of your constituents voted for a limit of two

1 terms, both times by fairly substantial margins. If you
2 wanted to run again, you should have done everything
3 possible to maximize voter participation by holding a third
4 referendum tomorrow, the day of a strongly contested
5 presidential election, where a high turnout would have been
6 assured. Instead, your actions had the opposite effect.

7 By waiting until September to announce your
8 intentions, you guaranteed that any special referendum next
9 year, would have a significantly lower turnout. Then,
10 through your corporation counsel, you opined that such a low
11 turnout might not satisfy legal scrutiny. Mr. Mayor, you
12 have no one but yourself to blame for where we are today.
13 Because of this, I am angry that you are using the City
14 Council to forward a personal agenda, in direct
15 contradiction of the will of the people.

16 What have you actually won? As a direct result of
17 your bill, your platform, the platform that you ran on has
18 been transferred from that of good government to that of
19 greed government, and the cynicism that New Yorkers had for
20 elected officials before your election in 2001 has now
21 returned, with all the mistrust and skepticism that comes
22 with it. The saying by Abraham Lincoln, "Government of the
23 people, by the people, for the people," hangs over the City
24 Council Chamber as a reminder as to who they represent. The
25 City Council represents us, Mr. Mayor, not you.

1 By this bill you have violated the public trust.
2 I am disappointed in you and I wanted you to know. Thank
3 you.

4 THE CLERK: Mr. Dave.

5 MR. DAVE: Mr. Mayor, my name is Dick Dave, the
6 Executive Director of Citizens Union.

7 Citizens Union has supported you and much of what
8 you have accomplished as Mayor. We believe that the City
9 has benefitted mightily from your leadership and have been
10 leased to work with you and your administration on a number
11 of issues, reform and otherwise. For us, the question never
12 was whether you and the Council had the authority to act on
13 term limits, rather it was, should you? Should you act on a
14 matter in which the voters had already made their position
15 clear, not once, but twice? Citizens Union thought not.

16 On a matter so fundamental to the form of our
17 government and the functioning of our democracy, we believed
18 that the issue deserved to be returned to the voters to make
19 the final judgment. Our position on term limits stems from
20 a belief that when elected officials stand to benefit
21 directly from a measure, they should be the ones not making
22 the rules. Though we spoke up, Citizens Union spoke up and
23 made our views clear, the Council and you ultimately
24 disagreed and we accept that.

25 In the interest of focusing now on the challenges

1 that the City faces resulting from the fiscal crisis,
2 Citizens Union is ready to turn the page. As a City we now
3 need to find a common ground on which we all can stand and
4 work together in making the difficult decisions that lie
5 ahead. You will need to develop a broad consensus in order
6 for you and the Council to act with the support of New
7 Yorkers as you serve the public interest. We urge you and
8 the Council to take steps to unite this City after such a
9 divisive fight over the issue of term limits. Citizens
10 Union stands ready to work with you once again on many
11 issues, including continued reform of our City and State
12 government, particularly in the area of bringing greater
13 public oversight to the matter of policemen's conduct.
14 Strengthening local governance of our City schools, ending
15 the partizan gerrymandering of our State legislative
16 district lines, and bringing much needed change to how our
17 elections are run.

18 Our City's ability to come together now, in light
19 of this fiscal crisis, will depend on how fair we all think
20 the process is in making the necessary tough fiscal
21 decisions. A fair process allows diverse New Yorkers who
22 disagree on policy and budget issues to come together at the
23 end, in common purpose, for the good of our City. We need
24 to do that now more than ever. The City needs not only your
25 pragmatic leadership, but your active listening and

1 consensus-building skills and that of the Council's to unite
2 this City in common purpose. Thank you.

3 THE CLERK: Mr. Kim.

4 MR. KIM: Good morning, Mayor Bloomberg, Members
5 of the City Council. My name is Kevin Kim. I've been a
6 proud resident of New York City for nearly thirty years and
7 I first want to begin by commending all of you for your
8 years of public service, but in that same spirit of public
9 service, Mayor Bloomberg, I urge you today, no I implore you
10 actually, to not sign this bill into law.

11 The issue here is not about whether one believes
12 in term limits or is against the principle of term limits,
13 that debate has been going on since the days of ancient
14 Greece and will continue to go on far beyond our years. The
15 real issue here is are we going to preserve the integrity of
16 the democratic process today? As you elected officials are
17 encouraging the general population, the often apathetic,
18 cynical, general population to engage in the democratic
19 process, what kind of a message are we sending here when
20 twice the people have voted via a public referendum to
21 impose term limits?

22 There has also been a serious ethical violation, I
23 believe, when you go to the Conflict of Interest Board home
24 page, New York City Conflict of Interest Board, it says, "If
25 you work for the City of New York, you have a special public

1 trust," and, quote, "The City must ensure not only that
2 employees act fairly and impartially, but also that their
3 actions appear fair and impartial." I think that if you
4 sign this bill into law today, that standard will not have
5 been met and there will be a serious erosion of the special
6 public trust that you enjoy today.

7 Finally, the United States of America still stands
8 as the beacon of hope, the role model of excellence for the
9 democratic way of life for the rest of the world. We send
10 troops to Iraq to fight for the democratic way, to tell the
11 people there, the Iraqis, if the will of the people is
12 such, then it shall be so. Yet, today, we sit here and we
13 are about to overturn everything we've worked for, for over
14 two hundred years. So I implore you, Mayor Bloomberg,
15 please do not sign this bill into law.

16 Thank you for much.

17 THE CLERK: Council Member Barron, followed by
18 Roxanne Delgado.

19 MAYOR BLOOMBERG: Councilman, the other City
20 Council speakers, we've let them go a short distance over
21 the two minutes.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Well, I'm a long-distance
23 runner, Mayor.

24 MAYOR BLOOMBERG: Thank you.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: You know, you're going to

1 sign the bill, so I'm not here to even ask you not to,
2 because this is an exercise in futility, but I do want to
3 say this: Usually this is my day off, Black Solidarity Day.
4 We usually take this day off to express our discontent with
5 what's happening in this country and in this City and this
6 State, but what happened here over these last few days is
7 unconscionable.

8 I know you're going to sign the bill and for my
9 brothers who are black also, on this Black Solidarity Day, I
10 have to be honest with you, I am ashamed of you. I'm
11 ashamed because we had an opportunity to stand up to the
12 Mayor and stand up to the Speaker and vote the will of the
13 people. The people have decided this. I heard Scott
14 Stringer say that he doesn't want a billionaire to decide
15 term limits; well, who do you think Mayor Bloomberg is? Who
16 do you think Ron Lauder is? These are the influences. So I
17 think that when we come to the point we can hit, listen to
18 the democratic process that allows people to have direct
19 democracy, direct democracy of the people; that's what a
20 referendum is, direct democracy from the people.

21 When the legislature branch undoes what the direct
22 democracy of the people has said they want twice, it's
23 disrespectful, and for you to say, Councilman White, that in
24 elections you want choice, do you know how many choices
25 you're going to have, having people running against

1 incumbents? Two or three? The choices would have been much
2 larger had the seats been open. It's not about choice and
3 you said it's not about Mayor Bloomberg, but you didn't
4 think of this idea to do something different with term
5 limits this term around, the Mayor brought it up. We
6 weren't even thinking about it until the Mayor brought it
7 up. This is about Mayor Bloomberg. This is about him
8 having four more years. This is about him thinking he's the
9 only one that can get us out of this mess.

10 Now, under his watch, and I'm not saying there's a
11 causation, but there's certainly a correlation; under his
12 watch the crisis occurred. He didn't cause it, but it was
13 under his watch that it occurred. This is a correlation.
14 To think that no one can get us out of this, and you all
15 would be the first to say "That's not what we're saying.
16 It's not about Bloomberg," but it is, because some people
17 got extra money in their districts because of their support
18 of the Mayor, and this process really needs to be
19 investigated, because some, who are under so much pressure,
20 so much pressure, and they reported these things to us,
21 can't say it publicly because they don't want to talk about
22 it publicly, but the pressure that people were under, this
23 wasn't no fair process. This was a process where people
24 were under tremendous amount of pressure and you know how it
25 works.

1 Where's the Speaker? Is she anywhere in here?

2 Where's the Speaker? Why don't she come for the bill

3 signing? The Speaker knows that she was not going to become

4 Mayor. What happened at City Hall, the mismanagement of

5 City Hall around the scandal around the slush fund, she knew

6 she wasn't becoming Mayor, so now I believe they got

7 together. They didn't come to the people because the people

8 wouldn't have gone for this. Instead, we went through the

9 legislative process and, listen, we want to end term limits.

10 Joy Simmons, who's a Co-Chair of Operation Power wrote an

11 article. She said the only way to get incumbents out, the

12 only way they leave is either through handcuffs or caskets,

13 because it's very difficult to get incumbents out of office.

14 Term limits offered us that process, and whether it's good

15 for civil rights because you want the right to vote and all

16 of that stuff, that is not the issue. The issue is simple.

17 Why couldn't we bring it back to the people? Why

18 couldn't the people have a chance to weigh in? Then we're

19 going to get all the people, we're going to go through the

20 exercise. We've had the hearings, but the bottom line, this

21 bill is going to be signed. This bill is going to be signed

22 and, Mayor, you won twenty-nine votes in the Chambers, but

23 you lost millions outside, and I believe it's going to be

24 reflected in the poles, and I am going to do everything I

25 can to see that it is reflected in the poles, even if it

1 means that we may not have the best of relationships. I've
2 always been a straight shooter with you. I've told you
3 exactly how I felt in privacy when you called. I will see
4 you on the battlefield.

5 I hope New Yorkers are listening, and the best way
6 you can express your anger is not at this hearing here,
7 because this is an exercise in futility, is at the poles.
8 It's at the poles. Let the Mayor know. Let all of those
9 who voted with the Mayor, this is a defining moment, let's
10 us know who has spine, is going to stand up to the Mayor and
11 the Speaker and who will say they need a park; they need a
12 school; they need a program. What about democracy? What
13 about the people, that these are the things that we will
14 give in to because of the power of the Mayor and the power
15 of the Speaker, and have you sitting up there like it's a
16 question of term limits. It's a question of what you can
17 get for your districts, and some of you did well, and I may
18 not do as well as you in the district, but I'm going to get
19 a good night's sleep, and my district did fine. You don't
20 have to do this. We have two new schools coming in the
21 district. We've got three parks renovated in our district.
22 We've got housing coming in our districts, some of the
23 projects that we're all working on, and housing in our
24 district. We can get these things without us selling out;
25 without us selling out.

1 So I am saying today, you won inside but you lost
2 outside, and for the twenty-two of us who stood up to you
3 and the Speaker, you won't call us hypocrites if they decide
4 to run again. We're not the hypocrites. We're not the ones
5 that slammed democracy. I hope just the twenty-two gets
6 reelected if they choose to run again, because they're the
7 only ones that stood up for the people. This is a
8 disgraceful day. This is a day where we're slamming
9 democracy. We're telling the people who are here, you can
10 talk, but your talk will mean nothing, because I'm going to
11 sign this bill and I'll get enough Council Members.

12 You know, I'm more upset with the Council than I
13 am with the Mayor - I'm not finished - the Mayor doesn't
14 have a vote. The Speaker has one vote. We have twenty-five
15 members of the Black, Latino and Asian caucus, twenty-five.
16 The Mayor doesn't vote; the Speaker has one vote. They have
17 to get the Council; the Council has the power to pass
18 budgets. The Council has the power to pass legislation. We
19 could have said to the people of this City that we don't
20 care how powerful the Mayor is, no matter what we're
21 offered. We don't care how powerful the Speaker is, we're
22 voting on behalf of the people. That's what they put you in
23 office for, and we could have stood up for the people and it
24 could have been a new day at City Council, and even if this
25 was our last year, we could have had our last year at least

1 checking the Mayor like Albany did when he wanted congestion
2 pricing; like Albany did when he wanted the Jet Stadium.
3 When are you going to stand up and say, "Mayor, no.
4 Speaker, no. This is wrong. We are elected by the people,
5 for the people, of the people, that's real democracy."
6 Ninety percent of the people in this City said "no" to this,
7 and you're talking about you listen to your constituents,
8 well, listen to them. They said "no."

9 This is a shameful day and, unfortunately, you're
10 signing it on Black Solidarity Day, but the people will get
11 the last word in November of next year. Thank you.

12 THE CLERK: Roxanne Delgado, followed by
13 Jacqueline Watkins Slifker.

14 MS. DELGADO: Dear Mayor Bloomberg, I am very
15 disappointed by your decision to overturn the will of the
16 people. I voted for you because you were not a politician
17 and also because I'm a Bloomberg user. I assumed you would
18 clean up City Hall and rid us of all the corruption, such as
19 the slush funds and the City Council Members redistributing
20 our money to their agencies that employ their friends and
21 family and to buy support for this election.

22 This hurts me also because of the carriage horses.
23 The abuse of horses represents all the corruption and self-
24 dealing among these City Council members. City Council
25 James Gennaro introduced a bill to increase their rates. In

1 return, he received a nice sum of donation from the drivers
2 and stables. City Council Michael McMahon's brother is the
3 lobbyist for Shamrock Stables. Shamrock Stables rents a
4 building from the Department of Ed. We need schools, not
5 stables. Then, there is Speaker Christine Quinn, who is
6 leading the campaign against the petty cabs for the main
7 competition for this inhumane industry. I hope one day the
8 Federal government will clean up the government and City
9 Council corruption and we are all free and the horses.

10 Thank you, Mayor Bloomberg.

11 THE CLERK: Ms. Slifker, followed by Janina
12 Sperling.

13 MS. SLIFKER: Hello, I'm Jackie Watkins Slifker,
14 and I am representing myself here, Mayor Bloomberg; however,
15 I do also participate in an organization where I don't get a
16 dollar a year to work, but I am volunteering my services so
17 that New York City and the community can be better. That is
18 what I think you're doing.

19 I agree that the democratic process might have
20 been violated; I don't think that I think the steps might
21 have been handled a lot differently; however, we are in a
22 time of crisis. You have already, on your blackboard, and I
23 heard it over 1010 WINS News last night or yesterday morning
24 when you spoke, have already planned and are already working
25 on making our budget less demanding and creating - you

1 sharpened your pencil, you're already working to help this
2 City face this unbelievable crisis that we're in now, we
3 will be in tomorrow, probably next year and the years to
4 come. It may even be a depression. We have every
5 possibility, in this City, because of the Wall Street
6 debacle, to have a depression in New York City. There is no
7 one more capable in this City or, as far as I am concerned
8 in this country, to handle these problems than you, Mayor
9 Bloomberg. I thank you for participating in this hard job.

10 You could be sitting by a fireplace reading. You
11 could be taking vacations. You don't have to be visiting
12 the hospitals with the firemen. You don't have to be
13 attending funerals. It's not an easy job; it's a tough job.
14 You're facing all this negative activity in this Council or,
15 actually, the Council went with you and I'm proud of them,
16 very proud of them, because you don't need this job. This
17 job needs you. Thank you for being who you are and thank
18 you, Council, for voting the way you voted, and please sign
19 that bill so that you can help New York City for the next
20 four years, and you will be elected.

21 It will be up to the people to vote next November;
22 you'll see, they'll be on your team. Thank you.

23 THE CLERK: Mr. Sperling.

24 MR. SPERLING: Good morning, Mr. Mayor and
25 Council Members. My name Janina Sperling. I am the

1 Executive Vice President of the Crown Heights Jewish
2 Community Council. It's a very unique community because we
3 have representatives that are from the African American
4 community, the Carribean American community, the Haitian
5 community and the Jewish community.

6 Mr. Mayor, I urge you to sign this bill into law
7 today. Let the people have the opportunity to vote for the
8 best to serve this great City. You could vote "yes" or you
9 could vote "no," and the people will have their voice. Mr.
10 Mayor, again, I urge you to sign this bill for the benefit
11 of this City. Mr. Mayor, go, go, go. Thank you.

12 THE CLERK: Patrick Eagan, followed by Doreen
13 Walker.

14 MR. EAGAN: Good morning. My name is Patrick
15 Eagan, and I'm an Assistant Professor of Politics at NYU.
16 Although political scientists can and do disagree on the
17 topic of term limits, I think I can speak for many in our
18 profession and, in particular, some of the foremost scholars
19 on this topic, that the bill that has been passed by City
20 Council is actually a good step for democracy in New York
21 City.

22 Those who promote the imposition of term limits
23 make a lot of promises. They claim it will increase
24 electoral competition. They claim it will weaken the power
25 of special interests. They argue that it will usher in a

1 new breed of citizen legislature to the halls of power.
2 These are all important goals for any democracy, but the
3 problem is that in the states and in the cities where term
4 limits have been imposed, none of these promises have come
5 true. Electoral competition does not rise because under
6 term limits a challenger's safest strategy is to wait until
7 an incumbent is termed out, rather than run when the
8 incumbent is weak. If anything, the power of special
9 interests may grow under term limits as seasoned lobbyists
10 and bureaucrats run circles around less experienced
11 politicians.

12 Studies show very little difference in the
13 backgrounds of those elected before and after term limits
14 are put in place. Many are lawyers, and after they are
15 termed out, many of them run for another office. Still more
16 become lobbyists. These are all practical reasons to oppose
17 term limits, but there's really a philosophical one as well:
18 The imposition of term limits is essentially a statement by
19 the people that they don't trust longevity in our elected
20 officials and see no need for the expertise that comes along
21 with it. It's an attitude that would easily dispense, for
22 example, with the accomplishments of U.S. Senators from
23 across the ideological spectrum; from Ted Kennedy, who has
24 served seven terms; Joe Biden, six terms; Arlen Specter,
25 five terms; John McCain, four terms. Take your pick.

1 In the end, we political scientists place a lot of
2 faith in the people's ability to evaluate politician's
3 records while in office and we think citizens are perfectly
4 capable of reelecting politicians when they perform well and
5 throwing the bums out when they don't. Those who remain
6 are, by and large, elected officials who are respected and
7 trusted by their constituents and do right by them. This
8 bill before you affirms the people's faith in themselves,
9 their elected officials and the democratic process.

10 Thanks a lot.

11 THE CLERK: Dana Walker, followed by Richard
12 Bartash.

13 MR. WALKER: Good morning, Mayor Bloomberg and
14 Council Members. I'll be pretty brief. I'm just a
15 construction worker and I have to say that I voted for you
16 in the past, Mayor Bloomberg, and I'm very proud of that
17 decision, that I have voted for you. You set up the School
18 Construction Committee, which ensured that women and
19 minorities get an equal say in construction or have access
20 to construction jobs, to which I am a beneficiary of. So I
21 am very proud of you for doing so.

22 However, I have to say here today, I am a little
23 disappointed today in your decision to sign this bill,
24 because I feel, as a voter, my voice has been ignored and
25 you have not listened to the people in signing this bill,

1 which you are about to do. We have voted in the past for
2 term limits and here you chose to sign a bill to extend
3 these limits. So I have to say I am somewhat disappointed
4 today. It's not the reflection of you as a Mayor. Because I
5 think you've been quite qualified as a Mayor. You've done
6 quite good for this City; however, once again, I'm for the
7 democratic process. I believe the people have spoken before
8 and they will speak again. Once again, I urge you not to
9 sign this bill, to which I know you will, but nevertheless,
10 I have to say I'm pretty much disappointed.

11 Thank you.

12 THE CLERK: Mr. Bartash, followed by Gloria
13 Smith.

14 MR. BARTASH: My name is Richard Bartash. I was
15 born in New York. I have lived and worked my entire life
16 here.

17 When I went to parochial schools in the 50's, the
18 nuns taught us about the capitalist system, that this is the
19 land of the free and home of the brave, and why this is the
20 greatest country on earth. They also taught us about the
21 graduated income tax and when I asked Sister, it seems
22 unfair what's going on, she said, "That's so people don't
23 become too rich." It's not until recently that I realized
24 it's more than the richness, it's the power that goes with
25 it. That power tends to drive people like me out of New

1 York City and more under your watch than any other Mayor in
2 my lifetime do I see New York becoming the land of the rich,
3 the privileged and the super rich. For that reason, I ask
4 you, please give somebody else a turn.

5 Thank you.

6 THE CLERK: Gloria Smith.

7 MS. SMITH: Good morning. I'm speaking on behalf
8 of the voters that feel betrayed. We voters who voted twice
9 for term limits and who believe that their vote, if there
10 was to be a change, that we would make that change.

11 My ancestors and others fought, were beaten, and
12 some of them died for the right to vote; so I take my vote
13 very seriously. I honor their sacrifice and I have voted
14 for thirty-eight years. Some in this room's ancestors came
15 here for freedom, to have a say in who was going to govern
16 them and who their leaders would be, but the Council let one
17 man undermine the voters of this City, and when they had the
18 power to say, "Take it back to the voters," they didn't do
19 that.

20 You're not doing you're not running again for
21 the economy of this City. The economy is a national problem
22 as well. it's not just a City problem. I feel that with all
23 of your expertise and Mr. Mayor, I want you to know, I
24 felt you did a good job - but with all of your expertise, I
25 feel that you could have still helped this City and you

1 didn't have to be Mayor to do it.

2 You were supposed to represent the constituents
3 and carry out the mandate of the voters, and that mandate
4 was that you would serve for no more than two terms or eight
5 years. If the opinion was that the law was to be changed,
6 there was plenty of time to take it back to the voters in a
7 referendum. So you ask the citizens, do you represent who
8 are responsible to the needs of the people and not career
9 politicians not to follow the people.

10 THE CLERK: Mr. Mohammed Rhasi, followed by James
11 E. Caldwell.

12 MR. RHASI: Good afternoon. I am Mohammed Rhasi.
13 I am representing the five boroughs with the Muslim leaders,
14 the Muslim community members that are here. Nothing sums
15 today more than the words of John F. Kennedy when he stated,
16 "Change is the law of life and those who look only to the
17 past or present are certain to miss the future."

18 In the current times that we are here facing,
19 today, we need this change and we are proud to support the
20 Council and the Mayor because there are many things that
21 have been happening in the past eight years, whether it's
22 the Executive Board 41, whether it's the bullying issues
23 with the community members, which have helped the community
24 tremendously. We look forward and we have been under served
25 previously, and during these past eight years, we have been

1 served tremendously. The members of the community see that
2 and they want to support this and they feel that they have a
3 say. Many are arguing that someone's voice is being
4 diminished; it's not. We are here and we're proud of it.

5 Thank you.

6 THE CLERK: Mr. Caldwell, followed by Dr.
7 Mohammed Calid.

8 MR. CALDWELL: Good morning. My name is James
9 Caldwell and I'm also the President of the 77th Precinct
10 Community Council, but we're not here in that capacity
11 today.

12 One thing I would like to say is that
13 relationships are very important, Mr. Mayor. You know, I
14 was asked today before I came here, "What do you think about
15 the Mayor signing term limits?" I said, "I'm delighted."
16 As a person who served this country for six years, my father
17 served, my brother served, you know, we understand that
18 relationships are very important in our community,
19 especially in the black community where black males are
20 really struggling trying to find work, and we need for them
21 to work so they can take care of their families.

22 I believe that, you know, eight years just wasn't
23 enough for you to complete your mission. I believe another
24 four years and, hopefully, in our community, you know, that
25 you can help bring jobs to the black community, because we

1 need it. Council Member Seabrook, even from The Bronx, is
2 working with us in Brooklyn and I think that's very great.

3 I also had an opportunity to see you on CNN
4 yesterday and how you were talking about the Newsweek
5 magazine, how you can assist, whether it be of Barak or
6 McCain. I'm for Barak, but anyway, that's another story.
7 Anyway, with the relationships that you have with them, you
8 can indeed bring Federal funding back to our community so we
9 can do the right thing in our community because, after all,
10 we are on nation, one people, and I think the Good Lord has
11 put you in a very unique position, you know, that you can
12 continue to bring about change in our community.

13 So I want to thank you for the time that you have
14 served and we certainly look forward to working on your
15 campaign in 2009 or 10?

16 Mayor Bloomberg '09.

17 MR. CALDWELL: All right, '09.

18 Thank you all so much and, once again, Councilman
19 Seabrook, thank you so much for what you do for the people
20 in Brooklyn. Thank you.

21 THE CLERK: Dr. Calid, followed by Patricia

22 DR. CALLID: Good morning, Mr. Mayor, good
23 morning Members. It's a pleasure and honor to be here. My
24 Name is Dr. Mohammed Calid and I represent a large civic
25 association on Staten Island with thousands of members

1 there.

2 We wholeheartedly support this bill. Mayor, you
3 should sign it because it is in the best interests of the
4 City of New York. 1993 and 1996 was a different time.
5 These are different times, and after 9-11, the City has gone
6 through a different tremendous loss in different ways, but
7 you have uplifted the City economically, health wise, and
8 also at the same time security wise. You know, people say
9 that the City Council was forced to do this thing. 8.2
10 million people, they represent, fifty-one members represent
11 8.2 million people. They are the ones who have spoken in
12 the last week and they said they are going to pass this
13 bill, and they have passed it 29 votes. So I don't
14 understand why we are talking about a referendum. This is
15 their referendum. 8.2 million people have elected fifty-one
16 members and they have voted.

17 So, Mr. Mayor, you are doing a great job. We are
18 very proud of your leadership. Economically, this City
19 needs another four years of your leadership because if you
20 are the leader, I think we'll be all better off and we'll be
21 a great City and as prosperous as always under your
22 leadership. Thank you for signing the bill, Mr. Mayor.

23 THE CLERK: Ms. Elaine Solomon, followed by So
24 Wattenberg.

25 MS. SOLOMON: Hi, Council and Mayor Bloomberg.

1 I'm honored to be here today and I have to say democracy was
2 delivered. I didn't waste my time coming here to the
3 testimony. My Council Person , Mike McMahon, spoke with us,
4 his constituents. He voted against the bill. I was unhappy
5 because I wanted a chance for Mayor Michael Bloomberg again
6 and I feel democracy will be served in the booth. We took
7 it to the City gate.

8 To say that this Council is invalid after what
9 I've watched just in these halls, just to see what you
10 people have gone through, you represent us, we, the people.
11 Now, the story is going to be told in the room when we vote,
12 but we need someone who has been tried in times of crisis.
13 We need a confident leader and if you ever listened to what
14 anyone else says after this decision, that would diminish
15 this Council, that would diminish your worth. You are a
16 confident leader and I'm just grateful that you'll have us.
17 You don't need to prove to yourself who you are, we need you
18 in this time of crisis, and I say thank you, Council, and it
19 was a very, very valuable decision you guys made and it was
20 a democratic view.

21 Thank so much and God bless you all.

22 THE CLERK: Ms. Wattenberg.

23 MR. WATTENBERG: Good morning. I would like to
24 speak on behalf of eight hundred thousand Russian-speaking
25 voters in New York. Mr. Mayor, we're honored and pleased

1 that you signed this bill. In my publication I ran just
2 recently a pole, eighty percent of the Russian-speaking
3 community is supporting you. We are extremely honored for
4 you to represent this City, the things that you do for the
5 community.

6 I've lived in New York for the last forty-five
7 years, and I want you to know we went through a lot of
8 crises: it's subway strikes and crime and financial crises,
9 and what you did for the City is for people and historians
10 in the future the right to learn about how it has to be
11 done. I thank you and on behalf of the community, you will
12 have mine and my community's support. Thank you.

13 MAYOR BLOOMBERG: Thank you.

14 THE CLERK: John Rostenkowski.

15 MR. ROSTENKOWSKI: Good afternoon, I'm John
16 Rostenkowski from the Friends of Poe Park in The Bronx.

17 October 23, 2008 was a day of darkness for
18 democracy, as a governmental coup d'etat was executed
19 against the government of the people of New York City,
20 taking advantage of economic troubles, taking advantage of
21 the attentions of the general election, taking advantage of
22 public fears and engaging in back-room deals, Mayor
23 Bloomberg and his allies enacted legislation which is
24 retroactively beneficial to them. This has the
25 characteristics of an ex-post-facto law, which is banned by

1 the constitution, while gloating over their naked power grab
2 and taking comfort in thoughts that the public spirit is
3 crushed, they did not realize that they finally came out in
4 the open.

5 During this election campaign there was talk about
6 elitism, and the question was raised, who are the elitists?
7 In New York City we know who are the elitists, Mayor
8 Bloomberg, his media pals, and twenty-nine City Council
9 people. They think they're better than the people of New
10 York City and have anointed themselves a ruling class. The
11 People of New York City are tired and angry. We will go
12 after them in removing from public office, and once we vote
13 their retirement, we will take back our City.

14 Thank you very much.

15 THE CLERK: Pastor Chorus, followed by Karen
16 Kostanick.

17 PASTOR CHORUS: Praise the Lord, everyone. I
18 just had to be here today and I just had to speak my mind,
19 because I believe in being fair and fairness we have to all
20 look at, we have to pass down to our children. We have to
21 be fair; we have to be honest; we have to do what's right.

22 I believe that Mayor Bloomberg, I think that he's
23 run a good term and I think he's done some wonderful things
24 in our City, in our education department, our streets and
25 different things in New York City, but I also believe that

1 we must be honest and fair. Now, when it comes time to
2 dealing with children and dealing with adults, what we have
3 to say to people, we have to be up front with it. If I were
4 to change rules, if I were to go along with the program,
5 then I would be wrong. We must, in light of everything, we
6 must follow the rules. We don't want what happened in
7 Florida, where they had truck loads of votes and just would
8 come to get them and smash them and not represent people.
9 We must be honest. We must be fair, and we must be upright
10 about things.

11 I think the Mayor has done a wonderful job, but we
12 must be honest about giving the people a chance to vote;
13 giving the people to have a say-so. Thank you. God bless
14 you.

15 THE CLERK: Ms. Oxford.

16 MS. OXFORD: Thank you for letting me be here.
17 Today is my sixty-sixth birthday. This is not how I planned
18 to spend it, but I mention that, Mayor Bloomberg, because
19 that puts you and me in the same generation, and you know
20 that what this was, was wrong. However, and I am very proud
21 to call you my Mayor. I'm a C-Span junkie. I'm proud when
22 I see you testify and I say, "There's my Mayor," much like I
23 point out the Christmas tree at Rockefeller Center and say,
24 "Now, that's a tree." However, I have a road to redemption
25 for you, and my idea, something I believe in very strongly,

1 is that none of this matters unless we do something about
2 our Board of Elections.

3 I have been a pole worker for many years and this
4 year I will not participate because I will not sign my name
5 to the work that is being done there. It needs to be
6 revamped from the very bottom. I believe that the new idea
7 about public service, young people, when they get to be
8 eighteen, the right of passage, they can vote, they should
9 be involved in the Board of Elections and I have other
10 suggestions. So if you will make that part of your
11 platform, I will be your biggest advocate. Thank you.

12 THE CLERK: Mr. Bodney, followed by

13 MR. BODNEY: You're all fidgeting behind that
14 table. I learned a long time ago that attention span is
15 geared to the gluteus maximus. Perhaps you would like to
16 stand while I speak and relax a little.

17 February 2006, in a Dyker Heights Town Hall
18 Meeting you promised that the Alshad Plant would be fixed
19 before you left office. Emily Lloyd took care of that.
20 They just started the project. It's a minimum of forty-two
21 months from completion. Is that why you're running for a
22 third term?

23 Veto the bill and let it go by the wayside.
24 Instead, agree to work with the next Mayor as a consultant
25 for one dollar a year, as you do now, and manage the budget

1 and do oversight for agency budgets. After two terms in
2 office, you know where the waste and corruption exists; you
3 can help clean it out. Frankly, if you ran your business
4 enterprise the way the City runs, you'd be working a
5 fourteen hour day anyhow and have to pray every Friday you
6 could make payroll. Let the new Mayor have the ceremonial
7 job; you take over the money and help him get it done right.

8 JFK left a legacy, it's not the Camelot, it's the
9 Bay of Pigs. Lyndon B. Johnson passed more civil-rights
10 legislation in one year in office than occurred in the
11 previous hundred years, but his legacy is the Vietnam war.
12 We don't have to talk about Richard Nixon or Fiorello
13 LaGuardia, who was a Mayor here, who is best remembered
14 because he read the comics to the children on the radio on
15 Sunday. These legacies hinge on the small things sometimes.
16 Shakespeare put it best when he wrote, "What the good men do
17 is often interred with their bones." Your actions here
18 today may very well be how you will be remembered for your
19 two terms, and all of your philanthropic deeds will fall by
20 the wayside when measured against this signing, if you do
21 it.

22 The only other concluding comment I have is that
23 if you going to have a legacy and you want something carved
24 in stone, don't let it be "I fought term limits and beat
25 it."

1 THE CLERK: Ms. Nagasaki, followed by Richie

2 MR. NAGASAKI: My name is Mika Nagasaki and I am
3 here with the Coalition to Protect Chinatown and Lower East
4 Side. I am here on behalf of the eleven thousand residents,
5 workers and small business owners and faith-based groups of
6 the Chinatown and Lower East Side community who really see
7 this bill as part of, Mayor Bloomberg, agenda to rezone New
8 York City into a playground for the rich and the wealthy,
9 excluding people of color and working-class communities from
10 living in New York City, you know, in Manhattan, Brooklyn,
11 Queens. We're seeing it now in The Bronx. Nature has been
12 privatized; over and over again, it has been gone to market
13 value, market rates. We're really tired of it.

14 We cannot stand even another year of you in office
15 and we're calling on all of New York, you know, eleven
16 thousand people are already against the rezoning plan that
17 you've put forward for the Lower East Side, East Village, to
18 protect the white and wealthy of East Village, north of
19 Houston, excluding Chinatown and the Lower East Side from
20 the protection provided to the white neighborhoods. This is
21 absolutely abhorrent and it's just exactly what's happening
22 with this current bill to extend term limits.

23 Three years, we were excluded from the process of
24 creating the rezoning plan and the same way, you know,
25 dozens of people have been waiting outside since 9:00 a.m.

1 to speak for two minutes. You know, like only five people
2 are in the room at a time. How are we supposed to hear what
3 each other is saying? How are we supposed to connect what's
4 going on throughout the City? Our rezoning plan that we're
5 fighting is racist, the same way that the other rezoning
6 plans in Queens and Brooklyn have been racist. Harlem, the
7 Harlem rezoning plan that just went through earlier this
8 year is racist. You need to stop it and you need to get out
9 of office and that's what we all think. Thank you.

10 THE CLERK: Mr. Barr.

11 MR. BARR: Good afternoon. My name is Richard
12 Barr. I live in Manhattan and I pay close attention to City
13 government for my entire adult life. I was not in favor of
14 term limits in '93 and '96. I felt that the legislature
15 ought not be so limited in the City if it isn't at the State
16 of Federal levels, and I didn't like that someone's private
17 fortune was driving the debate. However, if the people for
18 it, then I believe that has to be the route to reversing it.
19 There was time to get it on the ballot. The Mayor and
20 Speaker frittered that time away a few months ago by
21 pretending they were against it even coming up. The Mayor
22 then conferred with his peers in real estate and other
23 industries and the publishers and eventually even the
24 cosmetics heir. They planned out the route to keeping him
25 in office, regardless of what most of us might or might not

1 have wanted; planned it billionaire to billionaire, and
2 then, after they were already set and the financial crisis
3 came along to provide an excuse, they pretended it was that
4 crisis which made it necessary to begin with; as if any New
5 York City Mayor can have more than a tiny impact on a
6 national and international economic crisis.

7 The Speaker pretended to take days and days to
8 make up her mind which side she was on, when everyone knew
9 that she, who has given new meaning to the word "compliant,"
10 would do whatever the Mayor wanted her to do, and Council
11 Members were walking the walls in tears, bouncing between
12 the bribes and the threats or in some cases maybe just
13 following their own self-interest. To torture logic, they
14 said that not letting the voters decide, even though they
15 had decided before, was giving those voters more choice and
16 good governments type helped give cover to the power grabbed
17 by saying that they Mayor should pledge to run next time
18 under campaign finance limitations in order to level the
19 playing field, knowing full well he wouldn't.

20 The editorial pages of the rich publishers who had
21 been against for it were now for it, also torturing logic.
22 It's a travesty; an obscene perversion of our democratic
23 system: Government of the wealthy, by the wealthy and for
24 the wealthy, a billionaire's ball. Thank you very much.

25 THE CLERK: Rosio Perez, followed by Howard

1 Foyer.

2 MS. PEREZ: Hi. My name is Rosio Perez. I'm a
3 resident of Staten Island. I'm here to support Mr.
4 Bloomberg because I think he did such a good job in the last
5 administration. I'm not here because I'm part of any
6 organization or anything like that, I'm just for myself.
7 I'm a typical New Yorker. I'm a home owner. I'm a business
8 owner. I'm a mother, a single parent. I'm very, very sorry
9 for what we are going through. I'm not the only one, but I
10 represent a group of ladies just like me, and I think the
11 only person that can help us right now is this gentleman
12 right here, Mr. Bloomberg. Thank you.

13 THE CLERK: Howard Foyer, followed by

14 MR. FOYER: Good afternoon. My name is Howard
15 Foyer. I'm here to urge the Mayor to sign Intro 845.

16 In September I finally retired as the District
17 Manager of Brooklyn Community Board Number 11. After
18 thirty-one years and thirty-nine years of City service. I
19 began my career when Abe Beam was the Mayor. Those were
20 tough times, but in my opinion, it's much rougher today.

21 Time and time again the Mayor and the Council has
22 demonstrated leadership. As a young man in the early
23 1970's, I remember being in a meeting with then Borough
24 President Sebastian Leone. The topic of the meeting was
25 "What's New York City going to do with its trash in the year

1 2000?" Well, Mayors came and have gone, Councils came and
2 have gone, they just said, "Well, we can't make a decision,"
3 but it was not until 2006, with this Mayor and this Council,
4 that we finally have a solid waste plan for New York City.

5 In 2003, the Mayor demonstrated a new vision for
6 New York. Some of the district managers were opposed to it.
7 Some community boards were opposed to it, and that was the
8 311 center, but I can tell you it's the biggest success
9 maybe in the history of New York City government. It made
10 the accountability to the agencies and it gave people
11 twenty-four hour-seven access to City government.

12 Eight years ago I was approached to run for the
13 City Council, but I decided not to because I did not want to
14 be in a job that had an eight-year term. I believe you
15 can't get the best and the brightest New Yorkers to go for a
16 job with the time ticking.

17 For those who oppose this legislation, let me say
18 that for thirty-one years I served at the pleasure of the
19 Community Board 11. That meant at any meeting I could have
20 been removed from my position by a simple majority vote. I
21 can only say this, that my wife has also just recently
22 retired. She was an elementary school principal and she was
23 proud to give up her tenure; but you're not getting tenure;
24 what you're merely giving is the voters an opportunity to
25 vote for four more years of excellent leadership. Thank

1 you.

2 THE CLERK: Mr. Asetta.

3 MR. ASETTA: Good morning, Mr. Mayor. Good
4 morning, Members of the Council. My name is Vincent Asetta.
5 I'm the Executive Director of the Council of Neighborhood
6 Organizations, CONO, a small, little organization is
7 Brooklyn.

8 I've come today not with the backing of thousands
9 of people, but from my independent surveys that were done in
10 the bagel store in Staten Island where I stop every morning,
11 this has been on the table for the last ten days at least.
12 Eight out of ten people in the bagel store, waiting for the
13 train, want the Mayor.

14 I have a little organization, as I said. It's
15 much like Floyd's Boy Barbershop from the Andy Griffith's
16 show. He'd get them just to stop in. They sit, they talk,
17 they give you their opinion. This is not the wealthy people
18 of New York. These are the less rich people they're the
19 poor people of New York, and sitting and listening to them
20 talk, the majority of these people that I have spoken to in
21 this organization, want the Mayor to continue doing the job
22 he is doing. They feel he's done a good job. I think he's
23 done a great job.

24 We have an election coming up tomorrow. I'm sure
25 that most of you have made your decisions. I almost wish

1 your name was on that ballot tomorrow. It would make my
2 decision a lot easier. Thank you and good luck.

3 THE CLERK: Betty Cohen, followed by Duane Smith.

4 MS. COHEN: Good morning. My name is Betty
5 Cohen. I work for Century 21 Department Stores and Century
6 Realty.

7 I first met Mayor Bloomberg shortly after he was
8 sworn in, in January of '02. It was at the reopening of our
9 flagship store, across from Ground Zero, four months after
10 the attack on the Twin Towers. People were frightened and
11 afraid to come back to this area, but Al Gindy was
12 determined to rebuild his store and Mayor Bloomberg was
13 determined to rebuild our City.

14 That terrorist attack was the worst physical
15 attack on this country since Pearl Harbor. This City, this
16 country and the world are now going through the worst
17 financial challenge since the Great Depression. As Mayor
18 Bloomberg and his administration guided us through the
19 physical rebuilding after 9-11, we now look to him to guide
20 us through the financial rebuilding. There is no one more
21 qualified. In difficult times people look for strong
22 leaders. There is no one more knowledgeable about financial
23 matters than our Mayor.

24 New Yorkers are a tough, strong, hard-working
25 people, and with a tough, strong, hard-working Mayor, who

1 has the financial expertise to help turn this crisis around,
2 we will be better than before.

3 Mr. Mayor, I urge you to sign this bill into law
4 and give the citizens of New York a chance to vote for four
5 more years of outstanding leadership.

6 THE CLERK: Duane Stoddy.

7 MR. STODDY: Good morning, Mayor Bloomberg and
8 associates. My name is Duane Stoddy. I'm a businessman
9 from Harlem. I've testified at the City Council on behalf
10 of this term-limits law, and I've seen great change in the
11 way the City has been run under your administration.

12 I'm honored to be here today in the signing of
13 this term-limits extension bill, and to let you know, Mayor,
14 that you have my continued support. Thank you very much.

15 MAYOR BLOOMBERG: Thank you.

16 THE CLERK: Simone Nansak, followed by Hi Chin
17 Lee.

18 MS. NANSAK: Hi, Mayor Bloomberg. I think you're
19 a very good person and I remember a couple of years ago you
20 took a picture with me and I thought that was really, you
21 know, very good and I was very happy, but I think that you
22 need to concentrate on people who are less fortunate than
23 you are because there but for the grace of God goes I and
24 you never know what can happen to you in this world. One
25 minute you're okay and the next minute, you're not.

1 I'm not homeless, thank God, but a lot of the
2 homeless people who are on the street, that could be any one
3 of us, and these people need to be taken care of properly
4 and they have shelters which are unsafe. At one point, I
5 went to a shelter and they tried to set my bed on fire and
6 my clothes. So I urge you, Mayor Bloomberg, please, I know
7 you're an influential man, and we're all human beings and we
8 have to come together and help other. Please help these
9 people. I mean, they get very burned out in the winter and
10 in the summer they can't function and we're all one. We're
11 all one of the human race, so we all have to get together
12 and help each other. It's very important for us as human
13 beings. "Do unto others as you would have them do unto
14 you."

15 I was okay until I wasn't okay, and I came from a
16 wealthy family, believe it or not. So, thank you.

17 THE CLERK: Hi Chin Lee followed by Joanne
18 Greenberg.

19 MR. LEE: Good afternoon, Mayor, Mr. Mayor. My
20 name is Hi Chin Lee, and I am an architect. I am
21 representing for AIA member, the American Institute of
22 Architects and also I am a leader of one of the minority
23 people which is Korean leaders.

24 I have a problem, a lot of problem in the City of
25 New York, which is Department of Buildings. I brought here

1 one project, one small project. I applied before five
2 months but still, from three months ago, I want to see the
3 planning examiner and the Commissioner, but still I can't
4 see him. This is a very serious problem, you make it. If
5 you delay any plan approved in this New York City, you can't
6 exist then; you know that. This is a very serious, not only
7 my problem, many architects, they are talking now.

8 Also, one project, we have a five thousand members
9 in the church, the Korean Full Gospel Church. We cannot get
10 the approval because they delay to see the plan examiner.
11 Already, three weeks ago no, almost four weeks ago, I give
12 it to Nancy in Department of Buildings, it's within the
13 Department. And Nancy, she's who is there, who is the
14 handling for the appointment. We give it to him in his
15 hand, he didn't give it to me until today.

16 If you delay any construction plan approved from
17 the Department of Building, you cannot make a nice City in
18 this country. You cannot make a nice economy system, you
19 know that. Could you give me answer right now, please? You
20 cannot make any good City in this hour, beautiful City, if
21 you delay this job I'm very concerned to apply New York City
22 candidate. Okay? I will see if you delay more than this in
23 our beautiful City. Please, change it.

24 If you want to see, I will give to you this
25 address of the building. Okay?

1 MAYOR BLOOMBERG: She will take your notes and
2 we will take a look at it. Thank you.

3 THE CLERK: Joanne Greenberg, followed by

4 MS. GREENBERG: Good morning, Mr. Mayor, City
5 Council Members. Mr. Mayor, I'd like to tell you that I
6 voted for you twice. I think you've done an outstanding
7 job. I'm a native of the Borough of Brooklyn, and my life
8 has certainly improved under your leadership.

9 Having said that, I want to say that New York City
10 voters have voted twice for term limits. It is my
11 understanding that you feel that there was not enough time
12 to convene an election to revisit the issue, that it would
13 not a fair and accurate representation of the voters and,
14 personally, I would prefer that the Mayor step down after
15 two terms rather than have the City Council overturn a
16 decision that was made by the New York City voters twice.
17 In doing so, I believe the City Council is overriding the
18 will of the people of New York City.

19 Especially at these times, I feel that our vote,
20 which is our voice, is being rested from us, and I urge you
21 to respect the vote of the individual by not signing this
22 bill. Thank you.

23 THE CLERK: Barney Borangelo, followed by
24 Jennifer Piro.

25 MR. BORANGELO: Good day. I'd like to also say

1 that I wish that the bill is not signed. After two voter
2 referendums which established term limits in this City, and
3 to have that bill just torn up and thrown away by twenty-
4 nine members of the City Council, is just disgraceful. In
5 the City of Chicago, they have no term limits and there's a
6 man that's been in charge for nineteen years, and that City
7 is just spiraling out of control into chaos. He has become
8 a power broker of that City and no one runs against him and
9 everybody that does seems to change their mind after a
10 little while.

11 I don't want to see that happen in this City. I
12 don't want to see somebody of your stature and your power
13 dole out your charity to people, maybe for the good in your
14 mind, maybe not for the good in my mind, but after eight
15 years, I think it's time that you and everybody else that is
16 at the end of their term limits walk away. Do your
17 philanthropy. Donate to your people. Give from your heart,
18 but when you give from your heart, don't make it that, "Hey,
19 I gave you, now remember me later."

20 I find that when I was here last Thursday, a lot
21 of the people that you have sponsored with cash came up and
22 they were all very happy to be there, cutting the line,
23 waving to the guide, getting up first. I waited nine hours
24 last Thursday, while you were in London talking about the
25 world economic problems and I am glad to see you here today.

1 I guess this is why I came, so I could see you face to face,
2 because that's how it should be. I don't want to talk to a
3 bunch of people. I want to see and talk to you personally
4 and I'm saying that signing this bill is the wrong thing for
5 you to do because it just makes you look like a guy, "I've
6 got the power, I'm going to keep the power, and whatever the
7 people say, it doesn't matter any more, because that's the
8 way it's going to be. I've got my twenty-nine votes." I'm
9 finished.

10 THE CLERK: Jennifer Piro, followed by Audrey
11 Smaltz.

12 MS. PIRO: Good afternoon, Mr. Mayor, Council
13 Members. I would like to thank those Council Members who
14 voted to continue a third limit for you. I especially would
15 like to thank my Council Member, I don't see him here today,
16 it's Erik Dilan, and for those of you who voted against the
17 Mayor, I'd like to say it was his choice to go this way.

18 I view him as a fsst-paced Mayor. If he had to
19 take an issue up the stairs, he is going to take the
20 elevator or maybe the fast moving escalator, and I like
21 that. Even though he likes exercise, I think that's what he
22 would do. Don't hold that against him because he chose to
23 do it this way. I feel, he has done such a good job. When
24 you do a good job, aren't you rewarded? Yes, you are
25 rewarded. The question here is: Is he a fair and competent

1 Mayor? Take a pole; the answer is "yes." So what is the
2 problem.

3 Those of you who voted against him, I would like
4 to tell you, please, abandon your lawsuits and please stop
5 the bickering and let's just get back to working with the
6 Mayor, who is the right man for this City, whether it's in
7 economic times or whether it's in farming, okay? Let's get
8 together and put this Mayor back in office for another four
9 years. If it's up to me, he's going for eight more years.

10 Thank you, very much.

11 THE CLERK: Audrey Smaltz.

12 MS. SMALTZ: Good afternoon, Mr. Mayor,
13 Councilmen, Audrey Smaltz is my name.

14 The Mayor, our Mayor, Michael Rubens Bloomberg,
15 has an approval rating of more than 70 percent. So that
16 tells you that the majority of the people of New York City
17 would like to see him remain as the Mayor of New York City.
18 He's a visionary. He's a leader. His leadership has taken
19 us into a better City. I'm doing better. My company is
20 doing better. The people that work for me are doing better
21 than they've ever done before.

22 He has a vision for a better education of public
23 schools. I know when I went to public school, public
24 schools were outstanding. Our Mayor, along with his staff,
25 Mr. Klein, they are seeing that something happens that's

1 going to be great for the public schools. That's what we
2 need, education. We need this Mayor at this time, now.
3 He's doing an outstanding, impeccable job. He's a leader.
4 The people he has working for him are leaders. He
5 delegates. They have authority. He's the Mayor that I want
6 to see the Mayor.

7 Please, you did it already, twenty-nine to twenty-
8 two. Let's sign the bill. I came here this morning to see
9 him sign a bill. I was here at a quarter of 9:00. It is
10 now 12:30. It's taking a long time to sign the bill. I
11 want to see you sign the bill. Thank you, very much,
12 everybody and I took less than the two minutes.

13 THE CLERK: Ed Wallace, followed by Peter

14 MR. WALLACE: I'll try to take less than two
15 minutes. Mr. Mayor, Members of the Council, my name is Ed
16 Wallace. Once upon a time I served in the City Council. I
17 was ousted not by term limits by the Supreme Court of the
18 Untied States.

19 I am here to urge you to sign the bill, Mayor, not
20 so much because the candidates will be able to run, because
21 the voters will be able to choose their candidates. This
22 term-limits law, which I have been opposed to and testified
23 over many years, in my judgment unconstitutional, deprives
24 voters of their choice. So while it's all well and good
25 that candidates may have a benefit, it's more important that

1 voters get to choose; and to site experience as the basis
2 for disqualifying a candidate violates the voters' rights.

3 Second, on the issue of the referendum, the
4 referendum that was held that introduced this concept had
5 thirty percent of the voters in the polling place pull the
6 lever on one side or the other of the question. So to
7 suggest that that's somehow the will of the majority of
8 people, when it didn't even encompass the majority of people
9 who went into the booth, is wrong. And when a fundamental
10 right like this one is at stake, the idea that the
11 majoritarian rule, without the fundamental liberty of the
12 voter, which is what our concept of democracy is, majority
13 rule, fundamental rights, that imbalance should not be
14 referred back to public referendum.

15 It was an act of political courage for everyone
16 here today and everyone in the Council who stood up for this
17 bill and who stood up for the rights of me, the voter. I
18 represent no one here today but myself and I urge you to
19 sign the bill. Thank you.

20 THE CLERK: Peter Golia.

21 MR. GOLIA: Good morning. My name is Peter
22 Golia. I'm here supporting extending term limits. I was
23 here supporting term limits in front of City Council a
24 couple of weeks ago and I'm here to say you've been doing a
25 great job and I'm going to continue for you and hope to see

1 this bill get passed and signed.

2 Thank you.

3 THE CLERK: Wayne Patterson, followed by
4 Josaphine Lee.

5 MR. PATTERSON: Good morning, Mr. Mayor, Members
6 of the City Council. I am here today, Mr. Mayor, to urge
7 you to sign the bill. Let's not delay it any longer.

8 The whole idea that we, as voters, will not have a
9 choice to choose our candidate because of some arbitrary
10 rule was established by a minority which was not a
11 representation of what the people of the City of New York
12 would like to see happen. So, therefore, I'm here to say to
13 you today: Let's hurry up with this hearing and let's sign
14 the bill. Let's get on with governing New York City in a
15 positive way.

16 THE CLERK: Josaphine Lee, followed by

17 MS. LEE. Hi. I'm here to represent the
18 Coalition to Protect Chinatown and the Lower East Side.
19 Actually, I am here to say that we are against the term-
20 limit legislation. It's not only unconstitutional, but we
21 believe that your continuation in this City is wrong for New
22 York City.

23 In this time of economic crisis, we believe that
24 we need a Mayor who is going to support small businesses,
25 that's going to support the communities of working people in

1 the City, and not drain the City of its working people and
2 not drain the City of its resources and of its money to
3 build luxury developments and high-rise developments, and to
4 make this a City only for the rich. You know, we'll make
5 sure that come 2009, that the City Council members who
6 support this term-limits legislation and the Mayor himself,
7 will not be able to represent the people of this City
8 because right now all you're doing is displacing working-
9 class communities and communities of color. Thank you.

10 THE CLERK: Phillip DePallo, followed by

11 MR. DEPALLO: Good morning, Mr. Mayor. Good
12 morning, Members of the City Council. I'm the President of
13 the New York Community Council. We're a Citywide civic
14 organization serving the people of New York City for the
15 last twelve years.

16 We are against 845A and our main issue is the
17 process. I heard a lot of things over the last couple of
18 hearings that Council Member Felder held and here today,
19 basically criticizing the two votes in 1993 and 1996. I
20 voted in both of those referendums. I have lived in New
21 York all of my life. I voted for two terms, and it was very
22 important to me at that time in history to have two terms
23 because there were a lot of issues with the City Council and
24 corruption in government.

25 Here we are, now, basically revising history by

1 you attempting to overturn the will of the public. It's
2 very important to remember that no Mayor enacted term
3 limits. No members of the City Council enacted term limits.
4 This was done by the people and you could say it was three
5 out of ten people that pulled the lever, two out of ten
6 people who pulled the lever, I was one of them. To take
7 away my vote is, as you said, Mayor, disgusting. The fact
8 that you also said in December that the actual ability of
9 this Council to use this method of referendum to take away
10 the will of the people was wrong and that it should be
11 removed. I hope you remember that you said that in
12 December, because I guess ten months is ten years in
13 politics.

14 In closing, I would hope that you really consider
15 what you're doing before you put pen to paper, because even
16 a lot of people in my organization support you, but they're
17 not happy with this. They want to decide to let you run,
18 not for you to decide for them. Thank you.

19 THE CLERK: Ms. Paula DeCock, followed by Joanne
20 Simon.

21 MS. DeCOCK: Good afternoon. My name is Paul
22 DeCock and I'm a citizen. I will not ask you whether to
23 sign or not to sign the bill, because frankly, it is
24 irrelevant.

25 Two weeks ago I testified in the careful

1 choreographed production that passed for a public hearing on
2 this bill. First, I expressed my outrage that our political
3 process has been hijacked by one man. Second, I let it be
4 known that as a public school parent, I could see first hand
5 that Mr. Bloomberg's tenure has not been good for the public
6 schools, no matter prizes he and the Chancellor get.

7 When our citizen panel was finished, we were
8 treated to a civics lesson. Council Member Jackson asked
9 the Chair to explain to us that to regular citizens like us,
10 what the proceedings were all about. He said we were
11 confused because all that was before the Council was a bill
12 to extend term limits and it had nothing to do with the
13 Mayor and it should not become a referendum on his tenure.
14 I was not the least bit confused then, and I'm not confused
15 now. Neither is the press as the headlines in the New York
16 Times that announced the results of the vote said,
17 "Bloomberg prevails."

18 Nobody is fooled. This is about a very rich man
19 stealing our government. Shame on all of us.

20 THE CLERK: Joanne Simon, followed by

21 MS. SIMON: Good morning. My name is Joanne
22 Simon. I'm a State Committee Woman and Democratic District
23 Leader in the Fifty-Second Assembly District. In the spirit
24 of full disclosure, yes, I am one of those people who is
25 running for what I believe to be a vacant seat in 2009, in

1 the Thirty-Third Council District.

2 I testified before the committee in opposition to
3 845A and I did so because I believe that the means do not
4 justify the ends. I am one of those people who unlike
5 previous speakers did not vote for the term-limits
6 legislation, I voted against it, and I believe that there
7 are a number of improvements that need to be made to term
8 limits. I don't think this was the way to do it and I am
9 very disappointed in everybody who has voted in favor of
10 this. Thank you.

11 THE CLERK: Randy Mastro, followed by Efraim,
12 Semaris.

13 MR. MASTRO: My name is Randy Mastro. I am a
14 former Deputy Mayor. I chaired two Mayoral Charter
15 Commissions and I and my law firm, Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher,
16 are now representing, on a pro-bono basis, a broad coalition
17 of New Yorkers, including Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum,
18 Council Members Bill de Blasio, Letitia James, and many
19 others, in advising that group on potential legal challenges
20 in connection with this legislation.

21 What we see here today is a civics lesson. The
22 name of the class is Democracy 101, and judging from the
23 overflow crowd here today in City Hall, you, Mr. Mayor, and
24 a majority of the Council are failing that class, because to
25 rush through by legislation such a fundamental change in our

1 local democracy, eviscerating the two term limit that the
2 voters twice overwhelmingly ratified, that's self-serving,
3 that's wrong, that's undemocratic, and it's illegal.

4 Mr. Mayor, there is still time for you to get it
5 right. Please, don't sign this bill. Put the issue back
6 before the voters in a special election that could be held
7 as early as this coming February. In so doing, you will be
8 letting the people decide and you will have proven, Mr.
9 Mayor, that you learned the most important lesson of all in
10 our local democracy, that our local elected officials
11 respect the will of the people. If not, Mr. Mayor, as they
12 say in my profession, we'll see you in court.

13 THE CLERK: Orkidia Activaris.

14 MS. ACTIVARIS: Good afternoon. Again, my name
15 is Orkidia Activaris. I live in District 11 in The Bronx,
16 and what I've prepared is directed to all of you and also to
17 the fifty-one members of the City Council that have the most
18 gracious staff. They took my calls when I was calling to
19 thank them and to encourage them to support this bill.

20 I am very grateful for this opportunity to thank
21 you all in person for your hard work and your efforts on
22 behalf of our citizens and your service to our City. As a
23 new American, I am very proud of this privilege, and it is
24 also as a new American that I like to emphasize what a great
25 country and a great City we live in. You should be proud of

1 representing and working to advance a system that allows for
2 this type of discourse and the type of revision that
3 produced this term-limits bill. The will of the voters has
4 only been given greater freedom. To me, this process
5 enhances democracy.

6 I thank you for the opportunity you have given me,
7 my family, and the City of New York, to have the option of
8 reelecting leaders who have demonstrated commitment,
9 strength and sound policies for the challenging times ahead.
10 All best wishes to all of you as you complete your terms and
11 in the election ahead. Thank you.

12 THE CLERK: Mr. Rodriguez, followed by

13 MR. RODRIGUEZ: My name is Placido H. Rodriguez.
14 I am from Washington Heights. I am the President of the
15 Dominican American Travel Agencies. I am the owner of
16 Biscaya Tours.

17 I have seen ups and downs in the City of New York.
18 We should be proud to have a Mayor like Mayor Bloomberg. He
19 has worked hard in all the areas, such as economic
20 development, affordable housing for low-income families,
21 education, and I cannot understand I understand that there
22 are people that are against it and people who are in favor,
23 but that's why we are living in the United States of
24 America. People have the right to talk.

25 We have chosen a Mayor to lead our City in the

1 right direction, and he will continue leading us. Our small
2 business people are proud to have a leader like Mayor
3 Bloomberg and, as I said, God bless American and God bless
4 Mayor Bloomberg. Thank you.

5 THE CLERK: Mr. Condrin, followed by Melanie
6 Samuels.

7 MR. CONDRIN: Good morning. My name is Patrick
8 Condrin. I am a long-time resident of Bay Ridge, Brooklyn,
9 born and raised in New York City. I am here today in
10 support of the bill to extend the term limits for the City
11 legislature and the executive branches.

12 Since 1972 I have owned and operated companies
13 here in New York City and also represented a good number of
14 others in different areas, including economic development
15 and tour and travel transportation, which I my profession.
16 There are many unusual years since 1972 when I started, and
17 during those many years and business cycles, small, locally
18 owned businesses were looked at to be having focused on
19 retention and development of those areas, it's my opinion,
20 Mr. Mayor and Council Members, that given the nature of the
21 opportunity that the City of New York has today, that we
22 would like to retain, like any good business model, retain
23 the management and the legislature and the Board of
24 Directors under circumstances which we have an opportunity
25 to extend for four years. For this reason I urge you to

1 sign this bill today and I can also say to you that many of
2 my friends in business are very supportive, especially in
3 small business, in the many areas that I am familiar with,
4 are very supportive in saying the same thing I am today.
5 So, thank you again.

6 THE CLERK: Melanie Samuels.

7 REVEREND M. SAMUELS: Good after, Mr. Mayor,
8 Council, everyone. My name is Melanie Samuels, Reverend
9 Samuels, from Bed Stuy Campaign Against Hunger. We are
10 located on 2010 Fulton Street, where I do have the
11 opportunity of feeding about seven thousand individuals
12 every month. Since what happened in New York City, on Wall
13 Street, I have also had the opportunity to see an increase
14 in those that are hungry.

15 What I thank God for is that our Mayor that is
16 sitting before us has experience. He is coming to the table
17 understanding and knowing that there is a need in New York
18 City and he does have the ability to help us. So, I am here
19 extending my hands to say thank you and, also, to agree with
20 you in extending term limits, because I believe that a lot
21 of New Yorkers will benefit from you being in office. Also,
22 we do have an option to vote and I'm looking forward to that
23 option. Thank you very much.

24 THE CLERK: Reverend Samuels.

25 REVEREND SAMUELS: Good afternoon, everyone.

1 City Council, Mr. Mayor, we are so glad to be here this
2 evening to support you in this great move that you are
3 doing. I must first say congratulations to the City Council
4 members who extended or allowed this to happen. I am very,
5 very proud of what you are doing in New York City. We are
6 living in one of the largest and one of the greatest cities
7 and we have one of the greatest Mayors that ever ran in this
8 area. We thank God for you.

9 The church in Bed Stuy is praying for you that you
10 will continue to uphold the statutes, what you started out
11 with. We have seen great changes in our streets, Amen.
12 Folks are getting work. The streets have been cleaned up.
13 Housing and all these different things are happening for my
14 constituency; my members are very happy. We thank God for
15 you. We are holding up your hands for you to continue to
16 lift up and hold New York City in your hands, and we are
17 praying for you and your staff. God bless you.

18 THE CLERK: Andre Calvert, followed by Marie
19 Lewis.

20 MS. CALVERT: Hi. My name is Andre Calvert. I
21 am a resident of Fort Green-Clinton Hill, Brooklyn.

22 Mayor Bloomberg, I come here today to urge you to
23 veto this bill. Over the past couple of weeks I have been
24 pretty disturbed by how the supporters of this bill, like
25 yourself and many Council members have tried to manipulate

1 the debate that support or opposition of this bill should be
2 based on whether you support extending term limits or not.
3 That's not the issue. The issue is about process.
4 Extension of term limits should only happen through voter
5 referendum because New Yorkers voted on it twice.

6 According to a recent Quinnipiac pole, eighty-nine
7 percent of New Yorkers say extension of term limits should
8 only happen through voter referendum. Signing this bill
9 today would be an attack on democracy that is unforgivable.
10 It would increase voter cynicism and set a terrible
11 precedent for the rest of the country. Just ask yourself:
12 How would you like to be remembered in the history books?
13 Do you really want to be remembered as the Mayor who along
14 with twenty-nine City Council members overturned the will of
15 the people?

16 You can put an end to this democracy nightmare by
17 standing with the people of New York. Please do the right
18 thing and veto this bill.

19 THE CLERK: Ms. Lewis, followed by Cathy

20 MS. LEWIS: First and foremost, I thank my Lord
21 and Savior Jesus Christ for the opportunity to speak before
22 you here today. My name is Marie Lewis. I was born and
23 bred in Crown Heights, Brooklyn. I'm an appointed member of
24 Community Board 8, a long-time activist in the community and
25 a human services provider in the community.

1 I urge Mayor Bloomberg to sign the term limits
2 the legislation extending term limits for three terms versus
3 two. I certainly thank all of the City Council members who
4 supported and voted for this bill. I am an ardent supporter
5 of it because I believe that we should have the option to
6 choose to be able to vote for proven leadership. Certainly,
7 Mayor Bloomberg and many in the City Council, you have seen
8 us through some really tough times, from coming out of the
9 wake of 9-11. You steered the City through an amazing come
10 back and have set us on a course of, you know, very good
11 some good times that could be ahead for us.

12 We certainly feel that especially in the wake of
13 these real trying times, we should have the option to be
14 able to continue leadership that's proven. You know, we
15 want to see through projects like Atlantic Yards, like Plan
16 NYC, and many other important initiatives that's been set
17 under way in the City, and we feel at least another term is
18 enough to really get that on good footing and moving because
19 it creates opportunities for many of us.

20 I deal with people who are contending with
21 unemployment and high rates of poverty, and these important
22 initiatives, like certainly Council Member Seabrook has
23 supported us out in Brooklyn with, is important. So please
24 sign this legislation. Thank you.

25 THE CLERK: Ms. Haft, followed by Jose

1 MS. HAFT: Hi. My name is Cathy Haft, and I live
2 right down here in Tribeca and Alan Gerson is my Council
3 person.

4 I voted against the term-limits referendums when
5 they were on the ballot twice, two times. However, I lost,
6 right. The people spoke twice. The people said they wanted
7 term limits; therefore, it's a conflict of interest for you
8 to say, "Term limits, no, it's not going to work for me. It
9 works for Giuliani, but not for me." I'm sorry, it's wrong
10 and it's undemocratic and you should vote against this bill.

11 I am the Board President of my condominium and
12 when I have business before the Board I recuse myself, and
13 all of you people who are up for reelection should have
14 recused yourselves as well. It's wrong. It's undemocratic
15 and I urge you not to sign the bill.

16 THE CLERK: Mr. Richards.

17 MR. RICHARDS: Good afternoon, everyone. I am
18 just an ordinary, regular citizen, a part of the fabric that
19 makes up democracy. I'm here because I am in love with
20 democracy, true democracy. I voted twice for term limits
21 because I look to the behavior of incumbents; their
22 arrogance and the ruthlessness of the incumbents, and I
23 voted for term limits.

24 I look again and I am seeing the arrogance of
25 those that are in power today, trying to usurp and to snatch

1 democracy out of the grasp of the people. I am sick and
2 tired of this foolishness. We have voted twice and I would
3 like us to have the right, I would like to have the right,
4 as a citizen of this country, to vote again. If I have to
5 vote a million times, that right should be in the hands of
6 us, the people. We should not give omnipotent power to
7 politicians. You are our employees. We hire you to do our
8 job and we should tell you when and how far you can go. You
9 have overstepped your bounds.

10 I say we should vote for this. Give us the
11 opportunity to vote on this and let us decide as a people,
12 because I want to see democracy flow down on this great
13 state here like the powerful waters of Niagara Falls. I
14 don't want you guys to sit up there and deny us that right.
15 You have gotten enough power as it is. You are trying to
16 snatch the little bit that we have as the people. We are
17 living in a monocracy, not a democracy, and I'm sick and
18 tired of it.

19 What rights and what opportunities do we, the
20 little people, have when we have to go up against powerful
21 people who use money to have many citizens that come in here
22 and talk so great about a Mayor that we can replace? I was
23 about to look over his head to see if there was a halo over
24 his head and I think enough is enough.

25 You fellows, I don't want this day to live on in

1 infamy, because if you vote this thing in, it will live on
2 in infamy.

3 THE CLERK: Moshe Endig, followed by Yaacov
4 Yablow.

5 MR. ENDIG: Good afternoon. My name is Moshe
6 Endig from United Jewish Care in Williamsburgh, south of the
7 community. I have just one word to say. When God asked us
8 to accept the Torah, first he asked to take, and we had to
9 answer "yes" before we knew what's going to happen and what
10 it means.

11 Seven or eight years ago we supported you, Mr.
12 Mayor, before we knew what you're going to do. Eight years
13 later, now, we support you because we know what you are
14 doing and what your capabilities for the City are. The only
15 thing I have to say in the name of my community is, Mr.
16 Mayor, you are the right man, at the right place, at the
17 right time. So we ask you to sign this bill. Thank you.

18 THE CLERK: Mr. Yaacov Yablow.

19 MR. YABLOW: I am not a politician, not a public
20 speaker. I am an actor and singer. On behalf of my Russian
21 American community, I strongly support the passing of the
22 bill.

23 We are living in very challenging times. There is
24 no better leader than Mayor Bloomberg to lead us through
25 these very, very hard times, and it's so hard to explain

1 everything in English, but I need to say I am a very strong
2 supporter to this bill and to see Mayor Bloomberg in our
3 life. It's very, very important to our community. In
4 particular, in this very, very strange, very hard times for
5 everybody of us.

6 THE CLERK: Ms. Macnine.

7 MS. MACNINE: My name is Elaina Macnine. I'm an
8 Executive Director of Brighton Beach Business Improvement
9 District, and I am an immigrant from the former Soviet
10 Union. Sixteen years ago I came to the United States and I
11 would never, ever believe that I would be given the chance
12 to speak in the City Hall of the greatest City, thank you.

13 I'm in support for this bill. The reason I am in
14 support, because it's so nice to talk about democracy, but
15 actually people have to look at obstacles. People have to
16 look at the situation that our nation is facing right now.
17 Mayor Bloomberg, who is doing the great job and I am so
18 proud because of him that Russian calls me Mayor as well,
19 Mayor of Brighton - that's not only Mayor Bloomberg, that's
20 two other Council Members who I work with, Mike Nelson and
21 Domenic Recchia, and I would never, ever be able to do my
22 job if it's not them, especially Domenic Recchia's office,
23 who took my hand, they took my hand and showed me
24 everything.

25 I work Brighton Beach Avenue every day. It's part

1 of the City of New York, and I see a lot of changes. It's
2 because of our Mayor. People can say whatever they want to
3 say and I would not say I represent Russian-speaking
4 community, I don't, but I represent small businesses, the
5 heart of American economy, and we are for this bill. Thank
6 you.

7 THE CLERK: Mr. Kaufman.

8 MR. KAUFMAN: My Name is Yechial Kaufman. I
9 represent the Borough Park community.

10 I'm here to support you, Mr. Mayor, your Honor,
11 signing this bill. There's a lot to be gained by
12 experience, dependable leadership, good leadership, and this
13 bill is going to do just that. When we look at academia, we
14 seek out just these virtues. When we look at business, we
15 look for these virtues. We seek them out in every other
16 field and now we're going to have the opportunity to have it
17 in government and local government. Thank you so much, Mr.
18 Mayor.

19 THE CLERK: Carmine Shamanko.

20 MR. SHAMANKO: Good afternoon. Mayor Mike, you've
21 done a good job. Your work with 311, your work with getting
22 New York City back on track with the motion picture industry
23 is distinguishable. For the first time I'm seeing bike
24 lanes popping up in places like Bushwick, Brooklyn, all over
25 the place. The esplanades running from Herald Square to the

1 Flatiron District, amazing great use of public space, and
2 I'm a Bloomberg supporter. However, I have to say, sir, you
3 will not be getting my vote this time around.

4 It's not that I don't support you running for a
5 third term, it's specifically the tactics you're using. By
6 waiting until September 5th when you could have gotten this
7 on the November 5th ballot, I think is a real shame,
8 especially for New York City. We have, in '93 and in '96
9 the voters have made their voice be heard and, you know, in
10 the spirit of this great national election we have, you're a
11 popular Mayor, you're doing a good job, you actually had a
12 chance to put this on the referendum; people are very
13 excited about voting. Instead, you kind of took a very
14 underhanded tactic to this and the City Council, so I just
15 cannot support you, Mr. Bloomberg, or the City Council, and
16 I urge all the residents of New York City to not vote for
17 you and to vote out all twenty-nine of the members of the
18 City Council that did not represent the people and the will
19 of the people. Thank you.

20 THE CLERK: Ms. Stone, followed by Gerard Baum.

21 MS. STONE: It's a privilege to be here. I'm all
22 for tolerance. Everyone is for tolerance, but how do you
23 explain to a fellow New York City voter what happened on
24 October 23rd? How do you explain our once two-term limit
25 law, approved twice by voters, and in existence for fifteen

1 years, now so quickly devalued and discarded?

2 On the one hand, you spend a hundred and fifty
3 million of your own money, a little more than one hundred
4 per vote on two runs for Mayor; on the other hand, you tell
5 us we're worthless, our votes mean nothing. Mr. Mayor,
6 you're putting up a wall between you and the voters; between
7 you and the people you serve. I hope you might consider
8 today to delay the signing or veto this voter-robber
9 legislation, with the understanding that there is purpose
10 and worth to each and every vote because we're Americans.

11 Thank you.

12 THE CLERK: Mr. Baum, followed by Patty Hagin.

13 MR. BAUM: I'd like to thank City Hall and the
14 members who have allowed us, the public, this opportunity to
15 be here to express our point of views with respect to the
16 proposition at hand.

17 When I am talking about one individual, I usually
18 don't like to say everything negative about that person
19 because I am sure there are good things about that person as
20 well. It's just one thing I would like to mention that the
21 Mayor has done which a lot of people seem to overlook, that
22 he's done something about the smoking, just to mention one
23 thing, for example. That's important to me. That's good.

24 However, Mr. Bloomberg, I believe you are making
25 an error in judgment. I understand for a combination of

1 reasons that you might want to run again, and you have your
2 own reasons, but the way in which you are going about it is
3 like undermining what New Yorkers have already spoken about
4 twice in the past. New Yorkers, as long as you've been in
5 the City you should know that New Yorkers are not to be
6 messed with. They spoke on this issue twice in the past and
7 it should be again before the people, instead of going about
8 it the way in which you did.

9 The twenty-nine members, especially the ten black
10 ones, who are in support of that, to me it's a sell out
11 because they're not really representing the wishes of the
12 community and then people wonder why we don't have any
13 unity; this is specifically one of the reasons why. It's a
14 bad idea and I wish that you would reconsider it. Thank
15 you.

16 THE CLERK: Ms. Hagin, followed by

17 MS. HAGIN: I'm Patty Hagin from the Outer
18 Borough of Brooklyn, Hood of Prospect Heights. Good
19 morning, Mayor Bloomberg.

20 After your strong-armed, knuckle-busting
21 performance last month to get term limits extended, I'd like
22 to refresh your memory on the subject of term-limits
23 extension, in your own words. You said, "The public has
24 spoken twice and they have spoken quite clearly. I don't
25 know that you should keep shopping for a different answer."

1 You said, "The public wants term limits and if
2 that's what they want, we should all learn to live with
3 them." You said, "For the City Council to extend term
4 limits would say to the public, 'We don't care what you
5 think. It would be disgraceful, an anti-democratic
6 outrage.'" you said, "We have term limits, which I said are
7 probably a good idea. I've always said a new guy can do it
8 better." The public has voted for it twice. You said, in
9 June, "I favor term limits and I'm looking forward to being
10 Mayor through midnight on December 31, 2009, and then doing
11 something else. I'm not seeking a third term."

12 You gave us your word on it. In fact, many words.
13 Please, Mr. Mayor, do not subvert the will and the goodwill
14 of eight million New Yorkers. Do not lift that pen. Do not
15 sign this disgraceful term-limits extender bill.
16 Unfortunately, Mr. Mayor, you have a bad habit of ignoring
17 the people of New York City. You don't care what we think
18 or vote; instead you govern imperiously, with an inner-
19 circle, limited constituency of a couple of dozen
20 billionaire over-developers, like the predatory Bruce
21 Ratner. You blessed his land grab in Brooklyn and look
22 where that has gone in five-and-a-half years; nowhere.
23 Jinxed.

24 By referendum we, the people, voted two times for
25 term limits of two terms. We never voted for Bloomberg

1 Unlimited.

2 THE CLERK: Ms. McNally, followed by June
3 Whitiker.

4 MS. McNALLY: Good afternoon. I'm Synovia
5 McNally and I'm from Flatbush, Brooklyn. Good afternoon to
6 my Council people, who I do know.

7 In September of 2001, following the World Trade
8 disaster, Rudy Giuliani thought that it in the best interest
9 of the City to remain Mayor. Your response, Mayor Mike, was
10 that no one is indispensable. Well, Mayor Mike, you're not
11 indispensable. Although you have done some fabulous things
12 for New York City, and items that I do applaud, there are
13 things that I've disagreed with, but overall you've been a
14 good Mayor. Don't taint your legacy. Do not sign this
15 bill. You are in control of your own legacy and we have to
16 keep the process versus the term-limits issue separate.

17 You're responsible for legacy, as I said, and at
18 the end of the day, Mike, it ain't right.

19 THE CLERK: Ms. Whitiker, followed by Dan
20 Mirzinsky.

21 MS. WHITIKER: Mr. Mayor, Gentlemen, I'm Jo
22 Whitiker. I've been a citizen of this City for thirty-two
23 years. I am very much for you signing this bill.

24 In looking at the economic times that we're going
25 through, the whole world, you have a handle on the whole

1 world's economics, the financial situation. I have worked
2 in many different industries in this City. I know the
3 struggles of people. I know of the heart that you have now
4 for not only the financial industry, Wall Street, but all of
5 our working people in this City. Everything is going up
6 with the economy. We really need you here to make sure that
7 everything is accounted for and worked on.

8 The other thing that I'd like to say, too, is that
9 we all know that there's good change and there's bad change.
10 In this case, I am very comfortable with having you staying
11 on, not only your expertise but the fact that the people,
12 the Councilmen and the different people around you that have
13 worked so diligently to work like on the Film Commission,
14 working on the schools - I'm a former school teacher from
15 Michigan, so I'm watching that aspect of it.

16 Also, you know, the tourism, the theater, we've
17 got to keep these things, and these people that you have in
18 line, it will take a while, if do make a change, to get the
19 changes. It takes, shall we say, a learning curve, getting
20 to know people, and getting things going. You've got
21 everything well oiled and I'd like you to sign this for an
22 extension so the people of New York have the choice to keep
23 you in office. Thank you.

24 MAYOR BLOOMBERG: Thank you.

25 THE CLERK: Mr. Mirzinsky.

1 MR. MIRZINSKY: Hello, Mr. Mayor. My name is Dan
2 Mirzinsky. I'm a resident here in Manhattan. Please,
3 please, please sign this bill.

4 As this City sees and acknowledges the financial
5 warnings of what is to become, we must make sure we are
6 prepared to deal with them as well as well as any other
7 problems. Allowing New Yorkers the chance to elect
8 officials like you to a third term is a step in the right
9 direction. You are not a Washington politician, but a man
10 who deals with problems head on. By giving me a chance to
11 vote for you, it's giving me a voice.

12 Even though there are opponents of a third term,
13 and I've heard them, I disagree with them. I want to put
14 the future of New York first and political agendas last.
15 This is a strong, great City with a great future ahead, and
16 I want to keep it that way.

17 Thank you for giving me a voice. Please keep New
18 York strong and please sign this bill. Thank you.

19 THE CLERK: Mr. Leyvanda, being followed by
20 Mariana

21 MR. LEYVANDA: Mr. Mayor, Esteemed Colleagues and
22 Dignitaries, I'm a little nervous, I've never done anything
23 like this before.

24 Dear Fellow New Yorkers, I have come today to
25 offer my support in favor of City Council moving the term-

1 limit restriction for the office of Mayor. While there are
2 many reasons both for and against term-limit restrictions, I
3 firmly believe that the economic challenges our City is
4 facing and will face over the next three or more years,
5 require that we first be able to recognize that these are
6 unique times. I'm not saying the expression "desperate
7 times require desperate measures" is applicable, I do not
8 believe this is an urgent, knee-jerk reaction to the recent
9 events taking place on the domestic or international
10 economic front. This situation did not come up over night
11 nor will its remedy take effect over night. However, these
12 times do dictate sober thought and sound judgment.

13 During Mayor Bloomberg's years in office I have
14 not necessarily agreed with all of his ideas, but I am of
15 the opinion that he has represented all New Yorkers in
16 carrying out his official duties. I'm also of the opinion
17 that he brings a greater than average sense and
18 understanding regarding business and economics to City Hall.
19 This is not to say that there are other mayoral hopefuls
20 that do not have these capabilities; I am sure there are.
21 As Mayor to govern a City as diverse and demanding as New
22 York requires, building relationships across communities in
23 the boroughs is important. It will be these types of
24 relationships that will be fundamental to steering our City
25 past the economic challenges ahead. If it were not for the

1 economic situation, I probably would not be here.

2 Mayor Bloomberg is here now and ready to serve if
3 elected to a third term. I am urging all New Yorkers to
4 support this measure. Thank you very much for your time.

5 THE CLERK: Ms. Bloom, followed by Christos
6 Kakulos.

7 MS. BLOOM: Hello. Hello, everybody, Mayor
8 Bloomberg. Last time that I was here, I want to read the
9 letter that I wrote to you, but I started to speak of other
10 things and the time went just too fast. So I decided to
11 bring the letter again and will read it to you.

12 Ladies and Gentlemen, "Mayor Bloomberg,
13 (inaudible) in 2004 and 2006 and I have tried to help you at
14 the time that you were running on 46th Street. Because of
15 your outstanding leadership ability, your capacity to make
16 New York a healthier and safer place, I would wish for no
17 other Mayor but you. Having lived in New York for many
18 years, I've observed other Mayors passing through and I
19 think you are the best Mayor that New York City has ever
20 had. You have committed yourself fully to many things doing
21 the common good with your ideals of intent and leadership to
22 stop us smoking to have less waste of that which is gas and
23 oil and to use more public transportation. To fix all the
24 schools and to spend money where it belongs, as well as
25 develop New York City, the progress for Brooklyn and New

1 York City, where I live."

2 So I thoroughly support you, your efforts towards
3 becoming, achieve for a third term, and I would like you to
4 sign that bill and please let me know how I can help you and
5 I love you and I think you are the greatest for many years
6 to come yet. So a third term is essential if you want to be
7 our Mayor. Thank you.

8 THE CLERK: Mr. Kakulos, followed by Richard
9 Dunn.

10 MR. Kakulos: Mr. Mayor, City Council, I'm Chris
11 Kakulos, Greek American, came from a very democratic
12 country, from Greece. Democracy was born there. So the way
13 that the democratic process is working in the City of New
14 York seems like smells "hundar" (ph). I cannot believe
15 that twenty-nine people, you know, they changed the law and
16 they're pushing for your third term.

17 The City of New York goes heavily on the average
18 New York resident on taxation. All of your departments,
19 they're working on a very heavy taxation. I am a small
20 owner, a real estate owner, and every year I see more and
21 more that the City of New York is becoming my partner.
22 We're having difficulties these days to survive, facing
23 heavy taxation. I hope you people, especially these days
24 with the economical crisis, you consider freezing up
25 taxation, looking more for the people that they invest in

1 this country, don't push us out. We are here. We are not
2 Wall Street speculators. We are investors. We invest in
3 New York City and we stay here. We love New York City and
4 we want the City to run democratically.

5 I'm arson of fire, they burned my building, the
6 City of New York did nothing to that. I'm struggling to
7 survive in this City. Please consider the average people
8 that goes to work and tries to pays his bills. That's why
9 eight million people right now, there is only two hundred
10 people out here coming to express their opinion because
11 they're having difficult to make a living.

12 Thank you and have a healthy retirement, Mr.
13 Mayor.

14 THE CLERK: Richard Dunn, followed by Mr.
15 Stewart.

16 MR. DUNN: Richard Dunn. Excuse me. Thank you.

17 I'm only here because you've already done what
18 you've done. You're a good man and I respect that, but what
19 I want to do is use that same managerial skills and take my
20 resume and short step whatever is normally the process for
21 getting a job. I want a six-figure income job. Again, I've
22 done business with your company, down with Brian
23 McLoughlin's office, and as I said, as a manager I respect
24 that.

25 Here's my resume. I need somebody's card to

1 follow up with and all I want is a six-figure income job.

2 Who do I need to give this to. Thank you.

3 THE CLERK: Mr. Stewart, to be followed by Joseph
4 Harris.

5 MR. STEWART: Good afternoon. I'm here to
6 express my opposition to the signing of this law. I wanted
7 to give honor to all the Council Members who voted against
8 it, who voted the way the people said they wanted it to be.

9 I, too, believe that, Mayor Bloomberg, you've done
10 an admirable job. There were some things I didn't agree
11 with, but on the whole you've done a good job. You were the
12 front runner, but when your term is up, for me to vote for
13 you, the signing of this bill just completely changes my
14 mind. It tells me that you're not listening to what the
15 people say. The people voted twice and said they didn't
16 want third term limits rather, they do want term limits.
17 Now, if the people had voted and said "Okay, let's get rid
18 of that," I would have been fine with that too, and you most
19 likely would have gotten my vote. There is no way at all
20 that you can get my vote now, now that you just basically,
21 you and the rest, I should say, I am going to quote Charles
22 Barron, "the spineless puppets who went along with you," I
23 can't vote for them either.

24 I live in Brooklyn. I've downloaded the list of
25 the votes and I've been talking to people and, hopefully,

1 they will vote the way I'm going to vote, whenever the
2 offices are up for those who voted for this. You will not
3 get our votes. Okay? Thank you.

4 THE CLERK: Mr. Harris, followed by Michael
5 White.

6 MR. HARRIS: Mr. Mayor, City Council, good day.

7 At eleven years old I sold ice cream on a truck.
8 I was making fifty cents a day, helping the man for a couple
9 of hours a day. At sixteen I bought an ice cream wagon. At
10 eighteen, I bought an ice cream truck. Twenty years old, I
11 put a down payment on a house. I bought more trucks. Then
12 I bought a building in Brooklyn and I was working with it
13 and it has some difficulties. The deed was stolen and
14 within time my building was given to the thieves. They tore
15 up my ice cream trucks, my equipment, everything I owned.
16 So I would ask you to look into that and see some of the
17 corruption that's going on in this City.

18 I can only speak for myself, but many people have
19 had their houses stolen from them. Thank you, sir.

20 THE CLERK: Mr. White, followed by Howard
21 Birnbaum.

22 MR. WHITE: Michael White, noticing New York.
23 You guys are working at break-neck speed here so I will
24 simply resort to using my testimony before City Council.

25 Now even going at break-neck speed to testify

1 before City Council I wasn't able to get through all of it.
2 So this is an opportune moment. I can't think though that
3 this testimony that I give today is going to be meaningful
4 because with the kind of political strong arming and
5 hardball that you've been playing, I can't think that you're
6 going to listen to it.

7 Because Bloomberg LP giving is clearly an
8 extension of Mayor Bloomberg's influence, the Mayor's heavy
9 personal giving to so many of the City's cultural
10 institutions has been viewed as a problem. It will have
11 pointed out that giving quietly immunizes the Mayor from
12 criticism. Institutions receiving money are less likely to
13 criticize the Mayor and each institution has associated with
14 it huge numbers of New York's most influential and wealthy
15 citizens whose impulses to criticize the Mayor are probably
16 largely neutralized. The silence may have been more
17 pronounced because people in organizations expected him soon
18 to be out of office.

19 It is not fair that Speaker Quinn has been using
20 the award and withholding of City Council Chairmanships to
21 manipulate Council Member voting on this issue. This belies
22 as disingenuous the story that Speaker Quinn told the press
23 saying that until days before she, herself, had been
24 undecidedly treating this as a difficult issue on which to
25 make a choice.

1 Mr. Bloomberg has told all of us that he is
2 uniquely equipped to help the City during this current Wall
3 Street crisis and the assistance only he can offer. That
4 isn't so. I've got the written testimony here and I've
5 examined that question, of your competence, in several
6 articles, picking up from where the Wall Street Journal op
7 ed page.

8 THE CLERK: Mr. Birnbaum, to be followed by
9 Walter Koppage.

10 MR. BIRNBAUM: Good afternoon, Mr. Mayor. I will
11 support your signing of this bill because you're doing a
12 good job since we elected you when you became Mayor, and
13 you're doing a wonderful job and everyone knows who like say
14 like Bill Thompson, Anthony Weiner says, they want the
15 higher office, get them. It's a free country. I'll support
16 you but not them. Thank you for your time and you're doing
17 a wonderful job. Thank you.

18 THE CLERK: Mr. Koppage, followed by Dave Brown.

19 MR. KOPPAGE: Good afternoon, Mr. Mayor. My name
20 is Walter Koppage. I really support you for one reason,
21 you're actually doing a very superb job for the City of New
22 York.

23 For one thing that I'd like to say, for crime,
24 there is crime in all five boroughs. Crime is absolutely
25 rising higher and higher. I would like to know if it's

1 possible if you can make it better. Thank you.

2 MAYOR BLOOMBERG: We're trying.

3 THE CLERK: Mr. Brown.

4 MR. BROWN: Good afternoon, Mr. Mayor. I
5 appreciate this opportunity to speak to you. I would
6 definitely like for you to know that I am supporting you one
7 hundred percent and please, I urge you to sign the document
8 or the bill to run for a third term.

9 My reason for feeling this way is that for a long
10 time I've been saying to people that what we need is a Mayor
11 with some business sense to run this City simply because due
12 to the amount of money that goes in and out of this City, we
13 need somebody who is a successful businessman who knows how
14 to manage money. Since you've been in office, you did one
15 thing that I said other Mayors should have done a long time
16 ago. When unions want more money, fine, give me more
17 production. You did that.

18 To make a long story short, what I'm really trying
19 to say is, I am sick and tired of seeing somebody's paid
20 for, lap dog politician sitting in the City for Mayor and
21 letting the City go down the tubes. So being that you're
22 your own man, you don't owe anybody anything. So, please,
23 sign the paper, run again, and you've got my vote.

24 MAYOR BLOOMBERG: Thank you.

25 THE CLERK: Ms. Labris, to be followed by Michael

1 Henriano.

2 MS. LABRIS: My name is Alice Labris. I'm a
3 former U.S. Department of State Foreign Service. I've
4 served in Turkey, Oman, and Sweden, which makes me
5 appreciate my rights as a citizen of the United States,
6 especially the right to vote.

7 I live in Harlem, in the middle income Mitchell
8 Lama Development of Esplanade Gardens, in the district of
9 Council Member Inez E. Dickens. I gave Michael Bloomberg
10 his first campaign T-shirt long before he declared the first
11 time, because I believe, as I did in Los Angeles, where I
12 encouraged millionaire businessman Richard Reardon to run,
13 that businessmen make the best mayors. I've been validated
14 by the service of Mayor Michael Bloomberg.

15 I'm against term limits in any form. Tough times
16 call for tough measures. I support Michael Bloomberg for as
17 many terms as he wishes to run for as Mayor or Governor, and
18 no term limits will allow me to keep my Council Member, the
19 Honorable Inez E. Dickens.

20 Thank you for this opportunity and thank you, all
21 of you, for your service to the City of New York and the
22 United States of America.

23 THE CLERK: Mr. Adams, followed by

24 MR. ADAMS: Good afternoon, Ladies and Gentlemen,
25 your Honor. Tomorrow the citizens of the United States are

1 going to make history and how ironic then that at the same
2 time we're going to do something so extraordinary, the Mayor
3 is about to do something so appalling.

4 A week ago tomorrow, I went to protest the Mayor's
5 attempt to grab power with the Council, in front of his
6 house on 79th Street and was arrested and spent almost eight
7 hours in jail for simply exercising my First Amendment
8 rights. This represents the sort of tyranny veiled behind
9 silk and wool suits that one has with Michael R. Bloomberg,
10 who represents the very kind of social Darwinist, trickle-
11 down policies that rezone neighborhoods all over the City to
12 throw hard-working people who have lived here and
13 contributed for a long time out on their ear, to make way
14 for people who are rich; to make this merely a City of the
15 rich. For a billionaire to pervert our democratic system in
16 this way is absolutely appalling. And for African-American
17 politicians, who never would have gotten into the City
18 Council without term limits, to aid him in doing this, is
19 just absolutely appalling beyond belief.

20 This is criminal and history will judge it so. It
21 is not worthy of the man who said that the public had spoken
22 twice and the public wishes should be honored, and here we
23 are today with the public be damned. This is wrong. This
24 is immoral, and history will determine that that is so. You
25 will all be judged for the role you played in it. Thank

1 you.

2 THE CLERK: Lee Ballard, to be followed by David
3 Tu.

4 MS. BALLARD: I'm going to keep my eye on the
5 clock. I'm glad we have two minutes versus two seconds, the
6 way things are going.

7 Good afternoon, and I speak in opposition of
8 Michael A. Bloomberg, citizen, signing the bill 845,
9 contesting voters' rights to speak regarding term limits.

10 Mr. Bloomberg, first, individuals who see further
11 than the end of our noses, thus New Yorkers who can see
12 around the corner and, more importantly, us Americans who
13 know the value of the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and
14 freedom of speech, we are appalled that you would use
15 something as platonic as currency to put a value on
16 something that is so intrinsic to what we Americans would
17 die for, and that is the right to exercise our freedom of
18 speech in a democratic way.

19 I don't look at you as a billionaire because I
20 know that's new money and that it's questionable if it
21 even has any value at this day and age. You're one of maybe
22 one millionaire who kept a smile on your face during the
23 bail out. I wonder why. We're suffering. We need a new
24 page and your signing Michael A. Bloomberg to something as
25 vulgar as overturning the public's right to speak concerning

1 term limits is the most unpatriotic thing.

2 THE CLERK: David Tu, to be followed by George
3 Mack.

4 MR. TU: My name is David Tu. I took the day off
5 from work today to come here and say this to you. I wore my
6 work clothes. You know, I didn't come with a prepared
7 message, but I just want to say one thing to you: You're
8 public enemy number one. All right. Public enemy number
9 one. I'm one of those students who had to drop out of
10 school because you cut the budget, because you raped the
11 tuition.

12 You know where I'm from? I'm from Sunset Park.
13 This racist rezoning plan that you put there, that you put
14 in Harlem, put in the Lower East Side, all over the City,
15 you're trying to drive out the working people who make the
16 City great and make the City run. I'm angry. I'm angry.
17 It's about time. I'm no exception. I'm a blue collar
18 worker. I'm going to be the first here to say, tomorrow
19 there's going to be two people just like me, and the next
20 day four, eight. There's going to be thousands of people
21 just like me, who dress like this who are going to speak out
22 against your racist redevelopment agenda for New York City;
23 your entire working-class people agenda.

24 Look, we're not going to be silent. We're not
25 going to be afraid. We have numbers. You might have the

1 money, but we have the power, and let the record reflect, if
2 I lose my job because I came out here today to exercise my
3 democratic right to speak as a citizen of American, of the
4 United States of America, let this be another crime that you
5 committed towards the City and let it be known that working-
6 class New York, working-class American won't sit on the
7 sidelines while you try to push us out of the City; while
8 you try to make us, the people who make this City run we
9 won't let you drive us into the dirt. Thank you. That's
10 all I have to say. The hell with your agenda.

11 THE CLERK: George Mack, followed by Larry

12 MR. MACK: My message is really addressed to my
13 Council Member, and his name is James Sanders. I know the
14 Mayor is going to do exactly what he wants to do because
15 he's a B and I know that this is a man, when he first
16 started out he was a Democratic, then he became a
17 Republican, and I think now he's an Independent.

18 My message I want you all to deliver to James
19 Sanders and Leroy Comrie too, whatever I can do to find
20 people just like that young man, we're going to help vote
21 these guys out. I'm going to get up each and every day and
22 I'm going to look at James Sanders and I'm going to find me
23 five thousand people who are going to run against him, and
24 we're going to make sure we get him out. I'm going to work
25 hard each and every day. I'm going to use every breath in

1 my body to work against him.

2 As I look at these two young men, I'm probably
3 going to work against you too. I'm going to go out there
4 and I'm going to organize, use a little Bloods and Crypts
5 and I'm going to give them hope. I'm going to show them how
6 somebody has taken away their democratic rights, because
7 when I look at you all, you know, exclude the Mayor, what
8 have you done for me? How dare you allow this man to take
9 away my rights when you're supposed to be here for me. I
10 would say it's a horrible thing that you have done. You
11 have basically sold my birth right to vote. You have taken
12 it away from me and you have sided with this Mayor and I
13 will let everybody know. I'm going to organize and I am
14 going to do whatever I have to do to get these twenty-nine
15 Council Members out, because they have nothing for me.
16 They're not even thinking about me or my people, nor do they
17 care.

18 It lets me know that this Mayor has been able to
19 buy you. That his friends more than likely will help you
20 run, will donate to your campaigns, all twenty-nine.

21 THE CLERK: Marian Groshian, to be followed by
22 Shamena Camara.

23 MR. GROSHIAN: Thank you. Good afternoon,
24 everyone, Mr. Mayor.

25 I'm a taxpayer and I keep paying and I keep paying

1 and I keep paying and it's getting to the point where I
2 can't pay any more. Eight years is enough for anyone to do
3 their thing, to show their stuff, and as far as I,
4 personally, am concerned, as a home owner, somebody who
5 drives a car, who has to pay tolls and buy gas, and you
6 know, if I have a drink once in a while that's been taxed
7 too. I quit smoking, but it gets harder and harder and I
8 think we need a change over the next four years.

9 So if you can find it in your heart and your
10 conscience to do the right thing, please don't sign that
11 bill. Thank you.

12 THE CLERK: Shamena Camara, to be followed by Mr.
13 Harris.

14 MS. CAMARA: Good afternoon. It is a pleasure
15 and an honor to be here this afternoon to speak to my
16 Councilman concerning this particular issue and what is
17 before us.

18 I would have liked for this particular issue to be
19 placed before the people of New York City as a vote, not to
20 take it upon yourself to go ahead and do this without our
21 rights. I have been a voting citizen for the past 34 years,
22 and this particular issue I would like to be able to vote on
23 it also. I am not against the Mayor in any way. In fact,
24 as far as I am concerned, he has done a wonderful job, but I
25 just believe and I think that the people of New York City

1 should be able to vote on this particular issue.

2 I liked the Mayor prior and he was asked, during
3 our crisis of 2001, to have a third term. However, he was
4 not given that chance and we went ahead and Mr. Bloomberg
5 was voted in as our new Mayor. We have not suffered, and I
6 think that this particular issue should, once again, be
7 placed before the people and allow us to have a chance to
8 vote.

9 I thank you for this opportunity to vote and I
10 hope that it will become a thing that we can do. Okay.

11 THE CLERK: Mr. Harris, to be followed by Claude
12 Burns.

13 MR. HARRIS: Good afternoon. Last time I stayed
14 in line for this long was in line to buy milk in the Former
15 Soviet Union, but I guess the cost today is well worth it.

16 When considering a candidate for any office in
17 this great City of New York, I think the question that
18 should be asked should be not what political affiliation the
19 candidate has or what is the candidate's economic status or
20 how many terms the candidate ran for the office. The
21 question should be, what the candidate will do for the
22 office, for the City, for this great City, and whether the
23 candidate is the best for that. What better answer do we
24 have other than the candidate's track record?

25 Mr. Mayor, you inherited the City of New York in

1 its post-September 11th days, the darkest days in New York
2 City history. I think you've been tested twice and you've
3 done a great job. This country is about choices. It's
4 about the right to choose, and with your power, Mr. Mayor,
5 it is your responsibility to sign this bill to allow the
6 people of New York to have the choice of choosing the best
7 candidate for this job.

8 Thank you.

9 THE CLERK: Claude Burns, to be followed Ricardo
10 Hernandez.

11 MR. BURNS: Good afternoon, all. As a volunteer
12 fire Chief city wide, throughout the City, I was able to get
13 funds and help the families in need through your tenure. I
14 thank you. As a family man, I was able to send my kids to
15 schools. My daughter is now in a charter school I'm very
16 emotional - then Ms. Wolcott came out, made sure that the
17 charter school's doing fine. My kids are getting a good
18 education. I'm satisfied.

19 As a businessman, after 9-11 I had to close my
20 business. I had to close it, but because of your resilience
21 and he unwillingness to let go, more money started coming
22 in. Folks started coming in from other cities, other
23 countries, adding more cash to the City of New York. I was
24 able to start two more businesses, a consulting company and
25 an Internet caf,. I'm satisfied.

1 I'm for you. I'm going to let you know that I
2 thank you. I appreciate you. Am I debt free? No. But a
3 few more years, you know, you never know. In fact, I'm
4 going to leave now to set up a payment plan to, you know,
5 settle some debt. I thank you for the opportunity for
6 creating funds so I can pay my debt. I'm for you. God
7 bless you. God bless you all. Thank you.

8 THE CLERK: Ricardo Hernandez, to be followed by
9 Rose Nourjes.

10 MR. HERNANDEZ: Good afternoon.

11 This City, as well as this country, is going
12 through a tumultuous time, at this point in time. Our
13 economic situation is almost through the toilets. For the
14 past two terms, Mayor Bloomberg, you have governed this City
15 in a manner that no one has ever done before. It is my view
16 that during these times, especially these hard economic
17 times, we need someone who has their finger on the pulse; in
18 my opinion, that person is you, sir.

19 You have created jobs. You have allowed tourists
20 to come to this great City of ours. You have done a lot of
21 stuff that we can all be proud of, and I, too, sir, am
22 urging you that you sign this bill today.

23 Thank you.

24 THE CLERK: Rose Nourjes.

25 MS. NOURJES: My name is Rose Nourjes. I am a

1 resident in Brooklyn. I went to City University. I got my
2 Associates Degree and I transferred to Columbia, which I
3 feel like I wouldn't have been able to get in without this
4 CUNY school investing in me. So, you can imagine like when
5 there's cuts in education I do like some of the things
6 you've done. I like the million dollar trees. I love the
7 smoking ban.

8 I think that I still see a lot of problems in the
9 City. Like I saw this man eating out of a garbage can with
10 no shoes. So that's kind of like when you see something
11 like that and then you see like money going to fund a
12 stadium, it kind of I don't think it's fair, but it's not
13 really about whether you're a good Mayor or a bad Mayor.
14 You've done some good things. You know, maybe I don't agree
15 with all of the choices, but I feel like it we should just
16 be able to choose, and if it's extended and we extend the
17 term limits for everyone, I couldn't imagine another if
18 George Bush wanted to get in another four years, it just
19 wouldn't it's unheard of, you know.

20 I know that when George Washington if he wanted to
21 be king, he said "no," because this is a democracy. So,
22 anyway, you have a lot of power. You have a lot of money,
23 you know, and I was thinking, you know, if you're throwing
24 it around I could use some braces and, also, I'm going to
25 owe one hundred and twenty grand to Columbia, so ...

1 Thank you for the good things you've done and I
2 hope that the people of New York will be able to choose, and
3 if you want to send the check, my name is Rose Nourjes. I
4 live at 110 Montague. Thank you. That's all.

5 THE CLERK: Elaina Salame, followed by Judy
6 Falston.

7 MS. SALAME: Thank you for having this hearing.

8 I'm a product of the New York City school system
9 where we learned about democracy and the importance of the
10 voice of the people and the integrity of our leaders.

11 Mayor Bloomberg, I would like to read to you what
12 you said in May of 2002 when the Council was voting,
13 changing term limits from two to three terms: "This bill
14 would send an unfortunate message about the impact and
15 importance of their votes and set a perilous precedent for
16 future leaders of this City. I believe it is simply
17 inappropriate for those members elected in 1997, who were
18 aware of the rules under which they were elected, to seek to
19 change those rules in a manner that may work to their own
20 advantage."

21 I am hoping that you will consider your words
22 carefully when making this important decision. You can
23 continue to serve this City as you have in other capacities.
24 It is simply not fair to make changes to the Constitution
25 without our consent and without asking for our voices to be

1 heard. Thank you for hearing mine.

2 THE CLERK: Judy Falston, to be followed by Maria
3 Castro.

4 MS. FALSTON: Good afternoon, and thank you for
5 having this hearing.

6 Like yourself, Mayor Bloomberg, I am a transplant
7 to New York City and I love this City more than I can say.
8 I have admired your performance in office. The 311 system
9 is absolutely brilliant. However, I strongly oppose the
10 current legislation to expand term limits. The people of
11 this City, as you know, have voted twice in favor of term
12 limits, and only they should modify that decision.

13 I personally have no philosophical objection to
14 extending term limits, and I would vote in favor of a three-
15 term span if I were given the chance. Mayor Bloomberg, if
16 you sign this bill, I will certainly vote against your
17 reelection, because you will have exploited the power of
18 your office to overturn the expressly stated will of the
19 people. Such an action proves your contempt for democracy;
20 your contempt for the law; and your contempt for your fellow
21 New Yorkers. Shame on you and shame on the City Council.

22 THE CLERK: Maria Castro, followed by Shatima
23 Jackson.

24 MS. CASTRO: Good afternoon, Mr. Mayor and
25 Members of the City Council. I'm here to support and to

1 applaud City Council for coming through with 845A, only
2 because it will give the people the actual opportunity to
3 vote for those who have been working in their communities
4 and well as the Mayor working for and within the City of New
5 York, but at the same time, you know, at this point in time,
6 we have to remember, as New Yorkers, in times of economic
7 distress, we can only be focusing not on elections, but on
8 economic recovery, and I think on this measure and the
9 measures that are going to be taken in order to salvage our
10 economy.

11 We thank you and we applaud you.

12 MAYOR BLOOMBERG: Thank you.

13 THE CLERK: Ms. Jackson, to be followed by Joe

14 MS. JACKSON: Good afternoon, everyone. My name
15 is Shatima Jackson and I'm opposed to this ruling to extend
16 to a third term because I think that you are taking away the
17 vote out of the people's hands, and at this time and in this
18 era, that's not a good thing, to take the vote out of
19 people's hands. People have the right to vote and whatever
20 they voted, you should respect it because took out their
21 time, their day, they voted on this, it should be respected.
22 That's one thing.

23 Secondly, Mayor Bloomberg, you're an okay Mayor,
24 you're okay, but the problem is, Mayor Bloomberg, is that
25 you're not for the working-class people of this City. I

1 cannot afford to live in the City any more. The average
2 home price is seven hundred thousand dollars in the ghetto.
3 Okay? Your City workers are not making seven grand a month
4 to pay the mortgage, okay? I feel that the City has been
5 taken out of the working-class people's hands and I want
6 someone new. I'm looking for a new person that's going to
7 bring new life to the City; who is going to fight for the
8 working citizens of the City. I feel we work, work, work,
9 work and nothing gets done in return. Nothing is for us.
10 Nothing is for the people making forty thousand. You want
11 us to live off of forty thousand dollars for four people,
12 you, yourself, can't live off of that.

13 Can you imagine living with four people in one
14 house making only forty thousand dollars? And this is what
15 you guys predispose us to. So I'm against it. I'm looking
16 for someone who is going to fight for the working-class
17 people of this City.

18 THE CLERK: Joe Garber, to be followed by our
19 last speaker.

20 MR. GARBER: Good afternoon, Mayor Bloomberg, and
21 all assembled. My name is Joseph Garber.

22 Today, Mayor Bloomberg, the signing of 845A is the
23 greatest example of democracy in action. On 10-16 and 10-17
24 hearings were held by the Government Operations Committee
25 under Chair Felder, to explore the pros and cons of this

1 bill. It was a spirited discussion, with all views of those
2 present heard.

3 On 10-20, three days before the voting on this
4 bill, you had a bill-signing ceremony where it was
5 interesting, only one Council person was there and myself
6 was the only speaker. When the vote was taken on 10-23, you
7 definitely won a victory and you showed what a good
8 gentleman you are and you asked for an olive branch, those
9 who voted against the bill. So this is a very good sign of
10 democracy.

11 In fact, today, before the Election Day, we're
12 having this bill-signing ceremony and this morning in
13 synagogues we read in the Book of Genesis where God told
14 Abraham to "Leave your place of abode." So this term limits
15 is a very good thing, that it makes you advance.

16 Mr. Mayor, today we're amending 1137, 1138 of the
17 City Charter, but I would like to say that if you go to the
18 City book store, which I just did on Friday, the City book
19 store has a copy of the City Charter that's dated July 2004
20 and published August of 2004, for a Charter Review
21 Commission to be appointed by yourself or by the Council.
22 It needs an up-to-date Charter so intellectuals can study
23 the Charter. Thank you very much.

24 THE CLERK: We have a couple of more outside now.
25 Benny Agosto, to be followed by Patrice Senior.

1 MR. AGOSTO: Good afternoon, Mr. Mayor, Mr.
2 Chairman, and distinguished Members of the City Council. I
3 appreciated your words this morning on New York One. I am,
4 too, a friend of Terrence Tolbert, a very close one, but I
5 am here to rise yet again to strongly denounce the actions
6 of the City Council and, quite frankly, you, Mr. Mayor.

7 I represent Morris Park, Pelham Parkway, Allerton,
8 Van Courtland Village, Van Ness and other areas as well. I
9 am here on behalf of my constituents who are just a mere
10 fraction of the two million men and women who twice voted to
11 have term limits. I am philosophically against term limits.
12 It's up to me, the voter, to tell you, our representatives,
13 when we want you to be here; when we don't want you to be
14 here. To overrun the people's vote is very wrong.

15 A lot of my constituents admire your work, Mr.
16 Mayor, and the work of the City Council, but this is wrong.
17 This is simply wrong. We urge you to reconsider. I know
18 that this is a done deal, but I couldn't sleep and bear
19 myself without saying that this is a very sad day. Tomorrow
20 is Election Day, record numbers of people are coming out to
21 exercise their vote. Margarita Lopez was right, this is a
22 sacred right to vote and although you have the right to
23 legislate and you have, sir, the right to sign this bill
24 into law, the fact that people came and took the time to
25 stand in line and vote, represents a sacred vote.

1 I just wanted to let you know what my constituents
2 and myself think. Thank you very much for this opportunity.

3 THE CLERK: Patrice Senior.

4 MS. SENIOR: Mr. Mayor, I'm happy to see you.
5 Greetings to the rest of the panel.

6 My name is Patrice Senior. I'm a black female,
7 human being, taxpayer, a Christian affiliated, primary
8 resident of the Borough of Brooklyn, Kings County, City and
9 State of New York. I strongly oppose your bullying and
10 strong-arm tactics that you have been using to railroad the
11 democratic process by buying yourself and your cronies into
12 staying into office for a third term.

13 The people of New York have spoken and they have
14 said "No more plantation politics." Can you hear us? I am
15 speaking on behalf of the voiceless, unlawfully evicted
16 tenants of the City of New York, especially the black and
17 brown tenants who have been illegally evicted because they
18 have no voice or political representation in the City of New
19 York government.

20 Since January 28th of '05, I was thrown out of my
21 home, a rent stabilized, two-bedroom apartment in Brooklyn,
22 by an out-of-county marshal, Bruce Frankenberg. He had no
23 papers, no warrant, nothing. I have not seen the inside of
24 my home since January 24th of '05. I have written to you
25 many times. You have not responded, neither to Mr. Elliott

1 Spitzer, who was then Attorney General, nor to my DA,
2 Charles Heinz, nor to the DA here in New York County, Mr.
3 Robert Morgenthau. They have remained silent. Why are we
4 not seen as human beings? And why are these people who are
5 illegally evicting tenants from their home not being
6 prosecuted and being locked up?

7 The landlord, Michael Rothenberg, who resides
8 right here, next door to you in Manhattan, on 71st Street,
9 his lawyers, his powerful, well-connected lawyers all have
10 his the judges in Kings County, that is Judge George
11 Heman, they have all violated the law and the Constitution
12 of this state. Why are they above the law? Why aren't you
13 doing something?

14 I thank you for listening and I hope that you
15 never get into term for a third term to do any more
16 plantation politics in the City of New York, it's not right.
17 Thank you.

18 THE CLERK: The last speaker (inaudible).

19 VOICE: Good afternoon. As I sat watching this
20 live telecast from my office, I felt compelled to come and
21 speak.

22 I am compelled because I know Mr. White, I know
23 Mr. Seabrook, I know Mr. Jackson, I know the Mayor. This is
24 not about Mike Bloomberg. Mayor, you have the power to sign
25 this bill. Sign the bill. You had this same storm when you

1 took over education. You had this same storm when you
2 redesigned New York City. This too shall pass. Be like a
3 palm tree. I had the opportunity yesterday to watch Joel
4 Olstein on Sunday mornings at nine o'clock, Channel 5. He
5 said there will be storms to come against you, all of you,
6 and in these storms you have to be like a palm tree. You
7 have to bend all the way down and let the hurricane blow
8 over, but when it blows over and the sun shines, you will
9 stand tall.

10 You have done some great things for this City and
11 all the members of the Council. As a union leader in this
12 City of New York it's very difficult when you go into a new
13 Council Member, time after time again, and have to start all
14 over again to try to make sure that your members receive the
15 benefits that they so rightfully deserve. Having the
16 opportunity to have Adolfo Carrion, Helen Marshall, Marty
17 Markowitz, Mr. White, Mr. Jackson, who has championed
18 education for eight years; he should continue to champion
19 education as a City Council Member. You should continue to
20 have your voice heard. The people have faith in you; they
21 have trust in you.

22 Now some people may not vote for you, Mayor, but
23 at the end of the day, this too shall pass. We will be
24 okay. Sign the legislation. Move the Council forward, move
25 this City forward; it is your responsibility to do that.

1 You have a fiduciary responsibility to ensure that the
2 public is taken care of the way that they are supposed to.

3 Now is the time for all of you to move forward.
4 You make legislation; you pass legislation; you sign
5 legislation. Let's go forward and do what we are supposed
6 to do for the men and women of this City, so that we
7 continue to fight for the rights of union workers and those
8 who don't have a voice.

9 Thank you for the opportunity to address you.

10 MAYOR BLOOMBERG: Thank you.

11 I have listened for four-and-a-half hours to
12 people who come and express themselves. Obviously, this is
13 New York City and you get a diversity of opinion. I've
14 thought long and hard about this. You know that I have,
15 over a period of time, fundamentally changed my opinion in
16 terms of how long somebody should be in office. I've not
17 changed my opinion in terms of the value of term limits. I
18 have made a commitment that I will appoint a Charter
19 Revision Commission to look at the issue of whether two or
20 three terms is appropriate and to put on the ballot the
21 ability for the public to either reaffirm what we have today
22 or to change.

23 There is no easy answer and nobody is
24 irreplaceable, but I do think that if you take a look at the
25 real world, of how long it takes to do things; we live in a

1 litigious society. We live in a society where we have real
2 democracy and lots of people have the ability to input their
3 views and approve or disapprove projects. I just think that
4 three terms makes more sense than two. I feel that for the
5 Mayor. I may not be reelected, but whomever does get
6 reelected, I think they deserve three terms, and if the
7 public, at any time, after any four-year period, decides
8 they're not doing a good job, then the public can certainly
9 make a change.

10 The one argument against term limits that I've
11 never had a great answer to is the argument that when you
12 have term limits you do limit the public's choice. I feel
13 that this time the public should have a choice, and while I
14 still have in favor of term limits, it is seriously
15 something that everybody should think long and hard about,
16 is there a better way to do this?

17 I am going to sign the bill and the public is
18 going to have a choice. They're going to have more choice
19 than they would have if I didn't sign the bill, and if the
20 City Council didn't act. Then, it's going to be up to
21 everybody that's running to make their case as to why the
22 public should return them or replace them, and I think that
23 that really is the right balance for democracy.

24 (Pause.)

25 Everybody, thank you for your patience, and be

1 sure you vote tomorrow.

2 (Whereupon, the proceeding was completed.)

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