

**Testimony of Carmelyn P. Malalis  
Commissioner and Chair  
New York City Commission on Human Rights  
Before the Committee on Civil Rights  
March 22, 2017**

Good afternoon, Chair Mealy, and members of the Civil Rights Committee, and thank you for convening today's hearing. I am Carmelyn P. Malalis, Commissioner and Chair of the New York City Commission on Human Rights. Today I am joined by Brittney Saunders, Deputy Commissioner for Strategic Initiatives, and Dana Sussman, Deputy Commissioner for Intergovernmental Affairs and Policy.

Just last month, I celebrated my two-year anniversary as Commissioner and Chair of the Commission, and I am incredibly proud of what our team has accomplished in this short period. In preparation for today's hearing, I took the opportunity to reflect on the work of the agency in this last calendar year, and can say that 2016 was nothing short of a transformational year for the agency. We built on the accomplishments of 2015 and continued to expand the agency's reach, strategic enforcement, and public education efforts. The Commission continued to fill key positions with top-notch personnel across the agency. I am happy to report that New York City has no shortage of people interested in standing up for vulnerable communities and fighting for human rights. When we have job vacancies, the application pools have been competitive; applicants with a demonstrated commitment to social justice seem eager to contribute to the work of the agency. Our talented and mission-driven staff enabled the agency to continue an ambitious pace of activity in calendar year 2016. We engaged in strategic enforcement efforts, utilizing our testing capabilities and filing more pattern and practice cases. We resolved complaints with more damages for and penalties on behalf of New Yorkers. We created new and ground-breaking programming to reach more communities across New York City. We continued to increase our staff's language capacity to better reflect the City we serve. When I first arrived at the Commission in 2015, only six languages were spoken across the agency. By prioritizing language access, we now have a staff that speak 29 different languages to reflect our emphasis on hiring culturally and linguistically competent staff who reflect the diversity of New York City. The Commission built on its major media campaigns of 2015 – on the Stop Credit Discrimination in Employment Act and the Fair Chance Act – by launching a nationally-recognized and award-winning campaign on bathroom access in June 2016, “Look Past Pink & Blue,” #BeYouNYC, in the face of the passage of transphobic and discriminatory laws across the country. As the xenophobic and Islamophobic rhetoric heated up during the election cycle, the Commission responded with a social media campaign, “I Am Muslim NYC,” in September 2016, to stand with Muslim New Yorkers and remind everyone that they are protected from discrimination in New York City. We doubled down on our investment in community and ethnic media to expand our reach, investing about 80% of our newspaper and radio ad buys in such media. After the presidential election, the Commission

quickly reassessed priorities; we held eight listening sessions with advocates on immigrants' rights, workers' rights, LGBTQ issues, racial justice, and faith leaders from across the City, reallocated resources, and launched several new initiatives in response to the needs of the communities with which we work and revamped our media outreach efforts including issuing new multilingual materials and a digital, mobile and ethnic media campaign on discriminatory harassment protections. In order to appropriately support the work I have described, we also overhauled the Commission's technological infrastructure and upgraded our technology in all areas.

Given that I am reporting on the developments at the Commission since we last met in March 2016, I am focusing my comments – unless otherwise noted – on the Commission's work and accomplishments from calendar year 2016, consistent with the data captured in our 2016 annual report as per the agency's statutory reporting requirements. This annual report was sent to the Council on March 1, 2017. I note that the calendar year is the period we are statutorily required to report on, which is a different period than that covered in the Mayor's Management Report, which captures data based on the fiscal year.

### **Staff and Personnel**

Thanks to the Council's and the Administration's continued support for the Commission, the Commission expanded our staff to fill nearly all of our allocated lines in 2016. Moving the Commission's Central Office from 100 Gold Street to its current temporary location at 22 Reade enabled the Commission to fill lines added to the agency as part of the Fiscal Year 2015 budget. When I began my tenure in February 2015, we had a headcount of 56. As of today, the Commission has grown to a staff of approximately 107, which is just 23 hires away from the Commission's full capacity of 130 lines. The only unfilled positions are the result of regular turnover, or were recently added to the Commission's budget through the January 2017 budget process. We have added staff in all areas of the Commission, including the Law Enforcement Bureau and Community Relations Bureau, and we have also added staff to key departments that we created when we revamped our infrastructure in 2015, including the Office of the Chair, Office of Communications and Marketing, the General Counsel's Office, Operations, and the Human Resources Department. In 2016, we also hired a Director for the Office of Mediation and Conflict Resolution, which we re-opened in 2015. The director is Liz Champnoi, a well-known mediator and arbitrator with expertise in building and implementing mediation programs.

In the Law Enforcement Bureau, we now have 29 current or incoming attorneys with a caseload and a total of 23 staff attorneys. In 2016, the Commission hired 19 new people into the bureau, including seven attorneys, one Assistant Commissioner, one Supervising Attorney, three Human Rights Specialists, one Infoline Director, three administrative support personnel, one full-time Testing Coordinator, and two part-time testers. As of today, we have 4 unfilled attorney lines as the result of attrition, and we have already extended offers for 3 of those lines. Under the supervision of Assistant Commissioner Sapna Raj, we have expanded our testing program to

include a testing coordinator, part-time testers, and administrative staff. As you can see from our annual report, this expansion has allowed us to complete over 557 tests in 2016 alone. We also built up our Infoline team to respond to the over 60% increase in inquiries the Commission experienced in calendar year 2016. The Commission now has a Director of Infoline and five Infoline specialists answering and returning calls, making referrals, and setting appointments for intake with Law Enforcement Bureau attorneys.

In the Community Relations Bureau, we now have a total of 29 Human Rights Specialists, including our Community Service Center Directors. In 2016, the Commission hired 10 new staff into the bureau, including nine Human Rights Specialists and one Managing Director. As of today, we have only eight unfilled lines for Human Rights Specialists and management staff in the bureau because of attrition, and expect to extend offers to hire for those lines within the coming weeks. We have thoughtfully grown this bureau to take into account the developing needs of our local communities given pressures they are feeling locally and nationally. With this in mind, we added a lead advisor for Muslim, South Asian, and Arab Communities, a position that we believe is unique for a city agency and demonstrates this agency's commitment to reaching some of the most vulnerable and targeted communities. Lead Advisor Rama Issa speaks four languages, including Arabic, comes most recently from the Arab-American Family Service Center and the Mayor's Fund, and has worked tirelessly to deepen the Commission's relationships and credibility with Muslim, South Asian, and Arab communities. As a result of our programming and focused relationship-building in this area, we have been able to create important strategic partnerships at a time when these communities are facing incredible hatred and uncertainty. In fact, I am proud that our work has been recognized by many advocates, including the Muslim Bar Association of New York (MuBANY), which is honoring the Commission on Human Rights with its Advocate of the Year Award next month. We have hired Human Rights Specialists for all five community service centers, which are located in each borough, who bring deep connections to diverse communities throughout the City, fluency in multiple languages, and cultural competency to reflect the communities of those boroughs.

Other areas of the agency have also been edified in calendar year 2016 to accomplish the mandates of the Commission. As you are aware from my prior testimony, we established the Office of the Chair to coordinate the administrative, legislative, administrative, and policy functions of the agency. Mses. Saunders and Sussman and I sit in this office. Consolidating those functions within the Office of the Chair has allowed the agency to play a more active role in legislative and policy discussions within the Administration and with the Council and public constituents. It also helps us to ensure that policy decisions communicated across the agency are consistent, whether made through the adjudicatory or rulemaking process. In this past year, we continued to strengthen these functions by adding a Deputy Commissioner for Strategic Initiatives, Ms. Saunders' role, as well as an Associate Policy Counsel and Policy Analyst, focusing on a mixture of policy development, interagency engagement, adjudication of appeals and decisions and orders, legislation, rules, regulations, and legal enforcement guidance. There are now four attorneys and a policy analyst working with me and my assistant in this office.

As our Law Enforcement and Community Relations Bureaus expanded to near-full capacity, we also continued to invest in the other areas of the agency that support and help to amplify their work. We continued to empower our Office of Communications and Marketing, which we established at the agency in 2015. Deputy Commissioner Carmen Boon has built a reliable infrastructure for this office and has strategically developed the capacity of the team with the addition of a Deputy Press Secretary to build on our robust 2015 press outreach and media relations and do more focused outreach to community and ethnic radio stations, newspapers and content vertical websites and a Communications and Marketing Coordinator to project manage media campaign production including procurement and contracts with MWBE media vendors, among other tasks

In calendar year 2016, we also brought on a Chief Information Officer and technology support staff to create a functional IT team focused on upgrading the Commission's systems to help us keep pace with the increasing demands on our agency. I am very proud to announce that we are nearly complete in our transition from the Commission's outdated case tracking and data management systems to a new, dynamic system that is scheduled to go live next month. This was an enormous undertaking that required extensive planning and developing with our Law Enforcement Bureau staff, our IT staff, DOITT and other City partners.

Finally, the General Counsel's Office added two assistant general counsels and the Operations Department created in 2015 added a budget analyst in 2016.

### **The Law Enforcement Bureau**

2016 was an incredibly busy year for the Commission's Law Enforcement Bureau. Building on a 30% increase in complaints filed in 2015, the Commission surpassed its 2015 numbers by filing 883 complaints in 2016. The Commission also fielded over 8,000 inquiries from the public, a 60% increase from the previous year and a testament to the outreach and communications work of the agency.

In the past year, the Commission significantly stepped up its affirmative investigation powers to initiate its own investigations into violations of the NYC Human Rights Law through information provided anonymously by members of the public or when the media or community stakeholders report information about general trends of discrimination. The Commission-initiated investigations that account for 426 potential violations, with some overlapping areas of protection. In employment, the majority of Commission-initiated investigations focused on violations of the Fair Chance Act (190); and in housing, the majority of Commission-initiated investigations focused on lawful source of income discrimination (137), a major priority of the Commission.

Similarly, the Commission significantly expanded its testing program in 2016 and undertook both matched pair tests and unmatched tests, far surpassing the statutory requirements placed on it in 2015, requiring five matched pair tests in housing and five matched pair tests in employment. In the context of employment, the Commission completed 289 total tests, of which

16 were matched pair tests; 235 tests based on conviction and/or arrest record discrimination and identified 148 instances of discrimination; 16 tests in the area of credit history and uncovered 16 instances of discrimination; 24 tests in the area of race, of which 12 were matched pair tests; and identified no instances of discrimination; and 12 tests in the area of gender, of which 4 were matched pair tests, and identified three instances of discrimination. In housing, the Commission completed 257 tests, of which 74 were matched pair tests, and the Commission focused its tests on lawful source of income discrimination and discrimination based on gender identity and/or expression. The Commission completed 210 tests in lawful source of income, of which 74 were matched pair tests, uncovering 53 instances of discrimination. With respect to discrimination based on gender identity and/or expression, the Commission completed 47 tests and identified 22 instances of discrimination.

The Law Enforcement Bureau continued to implement changes in 2016 to further the promise that the Commission on Human Rights should serve as an equivalent venue for justice to state or federal court. This work required raising the standard for investigations, conducting in-depth investigations to identify pattern and practice violations, and obtaining respondents' full compliance with all areas of the City Human Rights Law. The Commission is also dedicated to ensuring that complainants' recoveries, through settlement, conciliation, or litigation, are equivalent to what they would receive if they chose to litigate their claim in state or federal court. As a result, the Law Enforcement Bureau may choose to hold cases open longer to garner a broader impact. This has caused the case processing time to increase from 420 days in 2015 to 536 days in 2016, but it has also resulted in increased penalties and damages recovered, systemic policy changes implemented, and more cases settled. While the case processing time has increased, the Commission closed more cases in 2016 – 436 – than in previous years, of which 121 were settlements through the Commission's conciliation process. The following are just a few highlights:

- **Nationwide Employer Settles Criminal Record Discrimination Case for \$50,000 in Damages, \$15,000 in Civil Penalties, and Training for 10,000 Employees**

An employee filed a complaint against his employer after he was denied a position in the financial services industry because of his conviction record. The convictions consisted of four minor traffic violations and a misdemeanor in 2000. After investigation, the Law Enforcement Bureau issued a determination of probable cause and referred the case to OATH for a trial. Respondents, the Complainant and the Commission entered into a conciliation agreement requiring the employer to pay \$50,000 in damages to the Complainant and a \$15,000 civil penalty, and to train managerial, supervisory, and personnel staff regarding the New York City Human Rights Law generally, and the Fair Chance Act specifically. As a result, nearly 10,000 employees will be trained on the City Human Rights Law.

- **Design Company Pays \$85,000 to Employee and \$15,000 in Civil Penalties in Pregnancy Discrimination Case**

A former designer filed a complaint against a design company and its owners alleging discrimination on the basis of gender and disability because she had been treated adversely and ultimately terminated because she was pregnant. The Law Enforcement Bureau determined that the respondents had discriminated against the employee by removing her from most of her job duties, forcing her to take leave, changing her pay to an hourly rate rather than a salary, and terminating her. The parties entered into a conciliation agreement requiring Respondents to pay the complainant \$85,000 in back pay and emotional distress damages; pay a civil penalty of \$15,000 to the City of New York; and attend a training on the City Human Rights Law.

- **Queens Medical Practice Pays \$95,000 for Refusing To Accommodate Employee Healing from Surgery**

A former employee filed a complaint against a doctor’s office in Flushing, alleging marital status, disability, and associational discrimination, because the practice’s president and manager repeatedly refused to give the employee time off to recover from surgery, ultimately demoted her to part-time hours, and fired her when she asked for another disability-related accommodation. The employee also alleged that the president and manager made disparaging remarks about her marital status and refused to let her take her son to the doctor. The Law Enforcement Bureau conducted an investigation and found probable cause to believe discrimination occurred. The medical practice and the Commission entered into a conciliation agreement requiring that the practice pay \$70,000 to the complainant in back pay and emotional distress damages; pay a civil penalty of \$25,000 to the City of New York; provide anti-discrimination training to all personnel; update its employment policies and procedures to comply with the City Human Rights Law; and display copies of the Commission’s “Notice of Rights” and “Pregnancy and Employment Rights” posters in prominent areas at its place of business.

- **Brokerage Firm Settles Source of Income Discrimination Case by Instituting Companywide Policy Reforms and Compensating the Prospective Tenant**

A prospective tenant who received housing assistance through the HIV/AIDS Services Administration (HASA) filed a claim against a real estate brokerage firm, alleging source of income discrimination. The Law Enforcement Bureau conducted an investigation and found that a broker had informed the complainant that an apartment was unavailable because the landlord would not accept his HASA voucher. The Bureau facilitated a conciliation agreement between the parties which required the brokerage firm to make companywide reforms, including revamping their employment, housing and public accommodations policies; training all employees on the City Human Rights Law; and informing the public about their rights under the law, including adding a webpage to their company website listing their policies concerning the City Human Rights Law. In addition, the complainant received \$5,000 compensation for emotional distress damages.

- **Store Settles Disability Accommodation Case Involving Service Dog for \$55,000**

A member of the public who has disabilities and uses a service dog filed a claim against a public accommodation because staff of the store refused to allow her to shop in the store with her service dog. The Law Enforcement Bureau conducted an investigation and issued a finding of probable cause to credit the allegations of discrimination. The parties entered into a conciliation agreement requiring the respondent to pay \$27,500 in damages to the complainant, pay \$27,500 in civil penalties, attend anti-discrimination training, create a store policy ensuring compliance with the City Human Rights Law, and post the policy.

### **The Community Relations Bureau**

Our Community Service Centers (CSCs), located in all five boroughs, with our Manhattan office co-housed at 22 Reade Street, work actively with local communities, community leaders, community boards, houses of worship, elected officials, small businesses, community-based organizations, and schools to provide vital know-your-rights and know-your-obligations information in a variety of delivery mechanisms. We host quarterly trainings and workshops in our CSCs, and we also provide trainings tailored in content and language to audiences based on the needs of their communities. In 2016, we expanded our training and educational curriculum to include 11 trainings on different areas of our law. In addition to expanding our rights and obligations-focused trainings, we are also continuing to expand our work to foster mutual understanding and respect across cultures and identities, through the Commission's first cultural competency training, Working with Transgender Individuals, in partnership with the LGBT Community Center, and the development of a new workshop with the NYU Islamic Center called Understanding Islam and Combating Islamophobia, which we are currently rolling out to our sister agencies. More trainings in this vein are in development, including one on Discrimination Based on Race and Color, which will challenge participants to confront issues of institutionalized racism and think about how people can stand up for racial justice in their own lives.

Our Community Relations Bureau also regularly hosts listening sessions and community roundtables to better understand the needs of the communities in each borough. In 2016, the bureau worked closely with the Mayor's Community Affairs Unit and Office of Immigrant Affairs to coordinate outreach efforts and more efficiently deliver important information and resources to various communities across the five boroughs.

### **Communications and Marketing**

The Commission's Communications team works tirelessly to strategically communicate the work of the Commission to reach the broadest and most diverse audiences possible. In 2016, the Communications team increased the Commission's social media presence dramatically across all platforms – on Facebook by over 400 percent; on Twitter with an increase in followers by 50 percent and impressions by almost 400 percent, and on Instagram with an increase in followers by over 300 percent. The Commission invested almost 80 percent of its total annual radio and

newspaper ad budget in community and ethnic media. The Commission's work was featured in over 500 news media story placements, including close to 60 stories and op-ed placements in ethnic media.

As I mentioned earlier, we are particularly proud of the Commission's #BeYouNYC campaign, which launched in June 2016 on subways cars, bus shelters, phone booths, ethnic and community newspapers, social media across various platforms, and digital banner advertisement in targeted media. The campaign asked New Yorkers to "Look Past Pink and Blue," and informed New Yorkers to "Use the restroom consistent with who you are." As the first campaign of its kind in the country, it garnered multiple industry awards, including the top prize in the government/politics category at the 2016 Shorty Social Good Awards, and was heralded by our community partners at the LGBT Community Center, the Anti-Violence Project, the ACLU's LGBT Rights Project, TLDEF, GMHC, and TransLatina Network, among many others, as groundbreaking and vital to transgender and gender non-conforming communities. The campaign built on the Commission's work in drafting and implementing Executive Order 16, which was signed by the Mayor in March 2016, reiterating the right of all New Yorkers who work for the City and who use City services to be able to access the bathroom or other single-sex facility aligned with their gender identity or expression, requiring all City agencies to post signage developed by the Commission with DCAS, and to train all frontline and supervisory staff on the both the Executive Order and on inclusion and diversity of transgender experiences and communities. The Commission worked closely with DCAS to develop the training and roll it out to City agencies.

As Islamophobic and xenophobic rhetoric continued to dominate the political climate throughout the summer, as it does to this day, the Commission responded in kind with its #IAmMuslimNYC social media campaign in September 2016 featuring some of the City's Muslim community. The objective of the campaign was to convey two messages: 1) Muslim New Yorkers, New York City has your back – you are vital and appreciated in our communities; and 2) to those that would deign discriminate against our Muslim brothers and sisters, you will face consequences under our law – the Commission on Human Rights will hold you accountable. The Commission also launched several key publications, including a pamphlet available in 11 languages regarding protections against religious discrimination, and one-pagers identifying the ten things you need to know if you are a Muslim New Yorker or perceived as such and the five things all New Yorkers should know about Discriminatory Harassment. The online campaign was executed across Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram featuring real New Yorkers. It generated millions of impressions and dozens of stories in print and online news outlets, and in ethnic and community media.

In 2016, the Communications team also planned and coordinated outreach on a variety of human rights-related issues, including, but not limited to Mayor de Blasio's Executive Order on Single Sex Facilities; fair housing protections in NYC; domestic violence protections in housing and employment; reaching Spanish-speaking New Yorkers; protections and accommodations for people with disabilities; and discriminatory harassment across a variety of platforms that include



digital and mobile; traditional; emergent; ethnic and community media; and public transportation and neighborhood store front ads.

### **Office of the Chair**

As I mentioned, the Office of the Chair (“OC”) is responsible for setting the general policy direction for the agency and supporting the Administration in its continuous efforts to advance initiatives aimed at equality and equity for all New Yorkers. In its increased capacity, the OC has ramped up its engagement efforts by, among others, increasing its technical support to sister agencies and elected officials on human rights related efforts, responding to inquiries from the public and ensuring general accessibility of our materials, advancing legislation that addresses gaps in existing protections under the City Human Rights Law, and creating tailored training and know your rights materials that are accessible and relevant to historically underserved communities in NYC.

In calendar year 2016, the OC worked closely with City Council, advocates and other relevant stakeholders on developing, reviewing, and negotiating important legislation aimed at strengthening protections under the City Human Rights Law. In January 2016, protections were added to prevent employment discrimination based on an individual’s actual or perceived status as a caregiver, supporting workers’ ability to provide necessary care for their family members without fear of negative repercussions at work. The City Human Rights Law was also amended to allow for an award of attorney’s fees in administrative proceedings before the Commission and for the recovery of expert fees and other costs in civil actions. The City Council also repealed antiquated language regarding protections against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, and clarified the strong, liberal standard under which the City Human Rights Law should be applied.

The City Human Rights Law was also amended to bolster protections in the public accommodations context by expanding coverage to the acts of franchisors, franchisees, and lessors of public accommodations. New protections were also added to make housing discrimination based on an individual’s status as a victim of domestic violence or stalking unlawful. In addition, measures were passed that expanded the circumstances in which it is considered unlawful discrimination to misrepresent the availability of a job, housing accommodation, or other benefit for discriminatory reasons. Finally, the law was amended to create an express cause of action for employers and principals whose employees or agents are subjected to unlawful discriminatory practices.

In our continuing efforts to provide transparency and clarity on the law, the Commission published know your rights and know your obligations fact sheets and FAQs on the new areas of substantive protections. The Commission also published its fourth legal enforcement guidance document, following the three released in 2015, focusing on pregnancy discrimination. The guidance has been well-received by attorneys who represent both employers, who appreciate the

transparency, and workers, who are gratified to have guidance that so clearly articulates their rights in this important and often misunderstood area of the law. Lastly, the OC held its first public hearing on proposed substantive rules in the Commission's history, relating to protections under the Fair Chance Act.

With our increased capacity, the OC has worked with many City agencies this past year to provide support in drafting training and policy materials, strengthening internal and external anti-discrimination guidelines, and implementing new provisions of the City Human Rights Law. In addition, the OC partnered with DOHMH and DCAS to issue comments calling on the FDA to eliminate its discriminatory blood donor deferral policy that prohibits men who have had sex with men in the past 12 months from donating blood. The OC also worked extensively with sister agencies, City Hall, and Corporation Counsel, in developing Executive Order 16, which was signed by Mayor de Blasio in March 2016, ensuring that all City employees and members of the public have access to the single-sex facility that corresponds with their gender identity and/or gender expression.

The OC also published four Decisions and Orders in 2016, in keeping with the Commission's promise to be transparent in its enforcement and provide guidance to advocates and litigants before the Commission on how cases are evaluated. The cases are outlined in the Annual Report but range from source of income discrimination by a large real estate broker, in which the Commission ordered a civil penalty of \$100,000 and a case where a taxi driver engaged in discriminatory conduct towards two lesbian passengers, in which the Commission considered a restorative justice approach to penalties and ordered the Respondent to perform community service in lieu of a payment of a fine.

### **Post-Election Response**

We recognized immediately after the presidential election in November 2016 that our work had to change dramatically. The Commission provides a uniquely important service, as a resource and a venue of justice for vulnerable New Yorkers, whether it is because of their immigration status, race, religion, national origin, disability, pregnancy, or gender identity. We shifted priorities in the wake of the post-election climate to respond to the needs of communities most vulnerable to hostility, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, misogyny, xenophobia, bias incidents, hate crimes, and feelings of fear and uncertainty. Throughout December 2016 and January 2017, the Commission convened eight thematic listening sessions with leaders from community-based organizations focusing on workers' rights, LGBTQ rights, racial justice, immigrants' rights, and faith leaders to hear directly about the needs of their communities, create partnerships, and leverage resources. Also in December 2016, the Commission announced an expansion of its Infoline by reallocating existing resources to add additional operators who can help victims of discrimination file claims, inform them of protections under the City Human Rights Law, and answer and refer questions on immigration matters. The Commission also launched a bias response team in December 2016 which consists of a team of multilingual community outreach staff responsible for

reaching out to victims of bias-based incidents to address the incidents, inform them of their rights, liaise with the NYPD where appropriate, and provide affected communities with know-your-rights information and resources. Because many reports of discrimination and hate have occurred in or near transit stations, the Commission, with support from the Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs, Community Affairs Unit, Public Engagement Unit, and the Department of Consumer Affairs, conducted a subway outreach and visibility day on December 20, 2016, at eight major transit hubs in the five boroughs, distributing multilingual information on religious protections under the City Human Rights Law as well as a new bilingual English-Spanish fact sheet on discriminatory harassment that we launched immediately after the election. To support these efforts, the Commission also launched a landing page at NYC.gov/NYCValues as a one-stop venue for information and resources for concerned communities along with a Google, Facebook, mobile apps, and ethnic media ad campaign promoting protections against discriminatory harassment which garnered millions of impressions.

## **Budget**

The Commission’s annual budget for Fiscal Year 2017 was approximately \$12,123,998 in City tax-levy money, \$170,750 in additional grant funding through a contract with the EEOC pursuant to our workshare agreement, and \$24,996 pursuant to a grant from DORIS to update our document retention policies. The Mayor’s Preliminary Budget (tax-levy) for Fiscal Year 2018 provides for a budget of \$11,443,000.

As I have described, 2016 was an incredibly productive year as we work to reclaim the agency’s promise as a true venue for justice and a resource for all New Yorkers. The Commission is filing more cases, mandating broader compliance, and deploying testing to root out pattern and practice discrimination. The Commission is reaching more communities through culturally and linguistically appropriate outreach efforts, creative programming, and groundbreaking communications and marketing campaigns and materials. The Commission is developing policy that serves a model for other jurisdictions, building coalitions, and earning credibility with communities across the city. We know we have a lot more work to do, but I and my staff are more committed than ever to fulfill this agency’s mission to protect all New Yorkers, regardless of race, color, immigration status, gender identity, gender, disability, religion, or any other protected category, from discrimination, harassment, and injustice.

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Thank you for convening this hearing, and thank you for your support of the Commission as we continue to rebuild and reinvigorate it. I look forward to your questions.