## 2018 NYC CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING

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May 9, 2018 6:13 P.M.
A P P E A R A N C E S:

## COMMISSIONERS:

RACHEL GODSIL, Vice Chair LARIAN ANGELO
KYLE BRAGG
DALE HO
ANNETTA SEECHARRAN

MENDY MIROCZNIK
JOHN SIEGAL
DEBORAH ARCHER

WENDY WEISER

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN

VICE CHAIR GODSIL: Welcome, everyone. We are happy to call this meeting to order, the 2018 Charter Revision Commission Manhattan meeting on May 9, 2018, at 6:00, slightly after, P.M. Thank you all so much for being here. This is the last of five public hearings that we are holding in each of the five boroughs. If you wish to testify or you have already signed up at the table -- if you haven't, please sign up at the welcome table right outside.

My name is Rachel Godsil. I'm the Vice Chair of the Charter Revision Commission. I'm a law professor and I focus on environmental law and the intersection of land use, property and housing. My focus as well is at the intersection which looks at the role of social science in helping to address issues of racial bias, gender, ethnicity, and bias based upon religion. My former role was as the Chair of the Rent Guidelines Board of which I am very proud. I also spent time at the Legal Defense Fund focusing on environmental justice. My work in the city specifically was challenging an incinerator in New York as well as the incinerator that was sited for Williamsburg which

I think we are all happy was never built. We did work to develop public hospitals. So it's really an honor to be part of this commission. I am delighted to invite our co-commissioner, Larian Angelo, to this meeting.

MS. ANGELO: Good evening. I'm Larian Angelo. I am currently a researcher at CUNY's Institute of State and Local Government. I spent a long time, most of my life working in city government in a variety of positions, mostly about budget. I would like to thank the New York Public Library for inviting us in to use this beautiful room in a beautiful building dedicated to equal access to knowledge for all people. So it's a very fitting setting for the Commission. MS. GODSIL: Thank you so much. And would the other commissioners like to introduce themselves? We could start at the end of the table to my right. Please pass the mic.

MR. BRAGG: Good evening, I'm Kyle Bragg, secretary/treasurer of SEIU 32BJ.

MR. SIEGAL: John Siegal. I'm a lawyer practicing here in Manhattan.

MS. SEECHARRAN: Good evening, my name is Annetta Seecharran and I'm the executive director
of Chhaya Community Development Corporation.
MS. MIROCZNIK: Good evening, my name is Mendy Mirocznik. I'm president of the Staten Island College.

MS. WEISER: Hello, my name is Wendy Weiser. I direct a democracy program at the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law. And I want to thank all of you for coming this evening.

MR. HO: Good evening, my name is Dale Ho and I'm the director of the ACLU's Voting Rights Project. Our work is dedicated to making voting systems and elections more open, accessible, and fair. And I look forward to hearing ideas from folks in this room about how we can do that in New York City.

MS. ARCHER: Good evening, my name is
Deborah Archer and I'm a law professor at New York Law School.

MS. GODSIL: So again, thank you all so much for being here. As you may know, because we of course focused on this issue, every mayor has the opportunity to appoint a Charter Revision Commission to review the City's Charter, essentially the Constitution for the City of New York.

Our role here is to listen to the people who come to the meetings, to read comments, to listen to people who have expertise on different issues, but essentially to really have an opportunity to cull all the ideas people have about how the New York City Charter is working and what issues of concern you may bring to us.

The role of the Commission then is to come up with recommendations to amend the Charter. These recommendations will be presented to voters in November. The Commission is called to review the entire Charter. So we can look at any portion of the Charter, but every mayor who has appointed a City Charter Commission has a particular interest. And as many of you know, that Mayor de Blasio is particularly interested in looking at how democracy works.

He is looking for us to engage you on questions of how our elections ought to be held, how much money should be involved, how we can get more people to vote, and ultimately how to make the city more democratic. So the opportunity to hear from all of you about this at the early stage of the game is critical to the process. And we are really enthusiastic that people are

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN sufficiently interested to be here on a weeknight. And this is again a wonderful turnout.

We conducted extensive outreach in advance of this meeting. Of course we followed all the required notice protocols and public notice in "The City Record." There have been hearing notices on the Commission's website. I invited to you review it if you haven't, nyc.gov/charter. There have been blast e-mails sent to thousands of New Yorkers. There have been notices to every major New York City media outlet, community news outlets, news outlets focused on particular community boards and ethnic newspapers, community boards and community groups.

It turns out we've entered the social media world and we have a Facebook and Twitter. I recommend you follow us on Twitter @nyccharter. The Commission will continue to ensure its outreach as broadly as possible. And certainly if you have suggestions on that, we will be delighted to hear that.

This meeting is being live streamed at nyc.gov/charter. We have posted videos of our initial meetings as well as our first two

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN
hearings in Staten Island and the Bronx. There are transcripts as well for those of you who would prefer to read. And we will continue to post videos of all of our public meetings and hearings as soon as possible on our website as well as transcripts as they become available tonight.

We have sign language interpreters and other listening devices available. So again, we want to make sure that everyone is able to participate. We have Spanish language interpreters and headsets available. So if you again would like to listen to this hearing or testify in Spanish, we very much want to make that possible.

So the next steps for the Commission are to have a number of additional hearings as well as a public meeting to discuss topics for expert panels. Those will be held in June. And then there will be public testimony. So again, now focused on tonight, this is a public hearing, and so the goal here is to have anyone who would like to speak have that opportunity.

As you know, again as I have said, this about the Charter and comments are open to any aspects of the Charter. As I've said, please make sure that you've signed up at the welcome table. In order to have an opportunity to listen to everyone, we will have a clock which allows three minutes per speaker. There will be an opportunity for the commissioners to ask questions.

If you are from an organization, please assign one representative from each group, organization, or institution to speak on behalf of the entire institution, because again, the goal is for everyone to be heard. Each person who wishes to speak will be afforded an opportunity no matter what time you arrive at the hearing.

We will have a structured order of testimony: Elected officials, if there are any; representatives of organizations; and individuals. And we will again provide commissioners an opportunity to comment or question to bring to the floor. And we would like commissioners to identify themselves before speaking.

And so again, thank you so much for being here. And we would like to identify any elected officials and offer them an opportunity to testify.

So we will first have Elias Holtz. Just to let everyone know, in order to have the testimony be as topic-focused as possible, as you might have noticed, we asked you to state what area you would like to focus on. And so panels have been constructed that will have people testify on similar areas of interest. And then there will be questions at the close of each panel for, again to make sure the commissioners have an opportunity to ask questions and that everyone has an opportunity to hear the specific questions about an area. So we will have panels of four to start.

And again, Mr. Elias Holtz, the Steering Committee for the Campaign for the Elected Civilian Review Board. After Mr. Holtz we will have Juanita Young, Mothers for Justice; Alexis Iwanisziw -- please make sure to correct me if I mispronounce your last name -- and Noel Hidalgo.

So if it each of you would like to come up. Thank you so much.

Mr. Holts?
MR. HOLTZ: Good evening, Commissioners, my

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN name is Elias Holtz and I'm on the Steering Committee, as you said, for the NYC Campaign for an Elected Civilian Review Board. We are a coalition of over 25 organizations, prominent individuals. And we are representing feedback from New Yorkers from over three years of neighborhood organizing. We are here to urge you to present the voters an amendment for an empowered and elected Civilian Review Board and independent special prosecutor over the police. As you know, we are in the middle of an accountability crisis with the NYPD. BuzzFeed News recently published an investigation in early March about hundreds of NYPD officers who were guilty of serious misconduct like brutality, sexual abuse, lying on official reports and perjury. These officers were not meaningfully held accountable and remain in the department. It's nearly four years since Eric Garner was killed and almost two years since Delrawn Small was killed. Yet the officers responsible for the killing and misconduct in those cases haven't been held accountable.

Our current Civilian Complaint Review Board is supposed to hold police accountable; however,
its hands are tied. As many of you know, the CCRB decisions only amount to recommendations to the commissioner who can then reduce the penalty or throw it out entirely. In 2017, 73 percent of disciplinary recommendations by the CCRB's Administrative Prosecution Unit were either reduced or flat-out ignored. This fundamental conflict of interest where the police are except to police themselves is a total roadblock to justice, to transparency, to accountability. It's absolutely unacceptable that those who are paid to serve and protect have open season on a populous with no real consequence.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Say it.
MR. HOLTZ: This is an insult to justice to all of us who are accountable under the law. We need real reform now and that's why we bring a Charter amendment for an elected Civilian Review Board and independent special prosecutor. This Charter amendment is simple. It makes our current appointed board elected and then empowers that elected board to make binding decisions. So instead of recommendations after in-depth investigations and full due process for officers involved, officers found guilty of misconduct are
held accountable with binding discipline. There's no overturn, watering down of those decisions by the commissioner.

In addition to a Review Board for police officers involved in criminal offenses, our Charter amendment establishes an independent special prosecutor's office whose sole duty is to investigate and prosecute those cases. This clears up the conflict of interest that the DA's office has when they are prosecuting their co-workers, the police. We have drafted this Charter amendment and have copies for the Commission that are handed out to staffers.

This crisis of police accountability in our city demands a big solution, the type of solution a Charter Revision Commission has the duty to bring. We think a review of the City Charter without addressing the police accountability crisis we believe is an incomplete job. We urge this Commission to hear the call of the community, to be leaders in the fight for police accountability. Bring this change to the voters of New York because without an empowered mechanism to hold police accountable, we are really only waiting for another death in the headlines. Thank you.

MS. GODSIL: Thank you so much for your testimony.

Mr. Hidalgo?
MR. HIDALGO: Hi, my name is Noel Hidalgo, or you could call me Noel. It's an honor to have this opportunity to represent New York City civic technology and design and data community. I'm the executive director of Make NYC. We are a member-driven good government organization. And in 2009, a group of concerned citizens started meeting to talk about the future of municipal open data. In 2012, we joined with Council Member then Gale Brewer to support the city's open data law. And over the last six years, our 4,700-plus members have fought to improve people's lives through technology, data and design.

In 2014, we published the people's roadmap to New York City, outlined the need for our government to adopt modern agile digital practices to be efficient participatory, transparent. Additionally, we outlined 34 different ideas that ended up producing nine new laws and these laws have strengthened the city's open data program and have helped shape the Charter provisions around data and information sharing. Based on our work with the Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer and Manhattan's 12 community boards and feedback from our over four thousand members, I want to identify three core areas that this Commission can use to improve our collective democracy.

First of all, government should be digital. Second, digital and data literacy are core elements to a 21st century democracy. And we need active civic participation. The testimony that's written has a number of recommendations and I will just briefly go over these. First of all, paper and PDFs are super-expensive. They limit access and privilege only the few. So we would love to see the city Charter enable or enshrine that all municipal information should be accessible to all regardless of device.

We also need to rethink how the Charter kind of delegates power out to the different agencies around technology and data. So far we have DCAS, we have DOIT, and then there are a number of provisions within the Charter that say please do something with data and technology. There's even mentions of former names of DOIT in the city Charter which is kind of frustrating because it's, like, how can city planning work with an agency that no longer exists?

We highly recommend that anything that's within the City Charter actually reference the piece of legislation that we got passed around the city record, so that way data is available in a nonproprietary, machine-readable format and a human-readable format that's capable of being downloadable in bulk.

Second, data and digital literacy are core elements of a 21 st century democracy. And fundamentally, every single one of our community boards and borough presidents are underresourced in their ability to use technology data and design. Second to that, there's a provision within the city Charter that talks about COPIC, the Commission on Public Information and Communication. And then it's 29-year history, it's met less than 29 times. Its charter mandated it to meet once a year. It would be great if we could figure out how to revive COPIC or at least move it its powers to another agency. Lastly, ideally we'd move civic

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN participation beyond the ballot box. That being said, DOIT is currently not Charter-mandated to respond to community board district needs. And it would be great if DOIT can actually respond to community boards and be able to facilitate their technology data and design needs. And it would be great if community boards were mandated to be transparent as to who is on the board, how long have they served, who is on which committee and a general sense of how to communicate with them. Right now there's next to zero transparency within community boards.

MS. GODSIL: Thank you very much.
MR. HIDALGO: Thank you.
MS. GODSIL: Ms. Young?
MS. YOUNG: Good evening, everybody. My name is Juanita Young. I'm with the Mothers for Justice. My son was murdered in New York by the NYPD in 2000. And going through the process of finding out what happened with my son, I had to deal with the CCRB. Through the years, I have been out here for the past 18 years dealing with other families that also dealt with the CCRB. And we got very, very little results. We know the CCRB answers to the mayor and to the

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN
commissioner. We are saying take the CCRB out of the hands of the mayor and the commissioner. Let the people elect an independent person that would have to answer to the people. You see when something happens with the NYPD and the mayor is involved, what happens? The NYPD stands up with the mayor.

Now it's not fair to the families that have to deal with such a tragedy, losing someone and then having to find out the answer. And we don't get no answers because of who we have to deal with. We are saying if it there's an independent person, the person is elected somebody from the CCRB, I feel and many other families feel that results might be better because why do we have to suffer pain unnecessarily and then the people that are supposed to serve and protect us are protected by the mayor and by the commissioner? What is it going to take people to wake up and see the system is not working? It's time for the people to say give us an independent elected Review Board and give equal opportunity to the victims. Thank you.

MS. GODSIL: Thank you so much for your testimony.

Ms. Iwanisziw?
MS. IWANISZIW: Good evening, my name is Alexis Iwanisziw. I'm the deputy director of New Economy Project and we are a group based here in New York City. It works with community groups to build and accommodate the works of all New Yorkers based on principles of cooperation, equity, ecological sustainability, and racial and social justice.

For more than the past 20 years, we have coordinated coalitions and campaigns that work to eliminate discriminatory economic practices that perpetuate inequality and poverty and segregation, and to promote cooperative and community-led development through community land trusts, nonspeculative housing, worker and financial cooperatives, and other strategies.

We see this Charter review process as representing a really important opportunity in a moment of compounding crises in the world, ecological, economic, political, for New Yorkers. We urge the Commission to take bold action to defend New York and its residents against these growing impacts and to advance equity, resilience, transparency and accountability in the City government.

We specifically urge the Commission to advance the City Charter that incorporates economic democracy in housing and land use, public finance, and our economy as a whole. By "economic democracy" we mean a paradigm for development that prioritizes the public good, and puts New Yorkers and their communities in the driver's seat rather than wealthy investors and developers.

Now specifically, we believe the Commission should prioritize making Charter revisions that first enshrine a right to housing for all the New Yorkers and support strategies to achieve this. And some examples include the disposition of public land and housing should prioritize public benefit over profit, ensure long-term affordability and prevent the extraction of public subsidy for affordable house. We also believe the Commission should prioritize the establishment of a municipal public bank for New York City to hold public deposits and make loans and investments that benefit all New York City communities.

The Charter right now establishes a
three-member Banking Commission that sets criteria for what banks the city will do business with. And right now, New York City has billions of dollars on deposit with Wall Street banks that redline New York City neighborhoods, extract untold millions of dollars in the financial crisis, are contributing to climate change through financing fossil fuels and so much more. The Charter Commission should also revisit the Banking Commission's structure and strengthen standards for institutions that the city does business with overall.

Finally, the Commission should support the creation of democratically controlled community-led strategies for development including through supporting cooperative financial institutions, housing, businesses and more. As a key first step, the Charter Revision Commission should consider the creation of a New York City Office of Cooperative Economics to explicitly support these fast-growing sectors of movements and to coordinate learning and support across New York City agencies and programs. Analogous offices have been widely successful in cities around the world, not to mention that New

York City is home to more than two thousand and growing cooperative institutions.

Just to wrap up, a City Charter rooted in economic democracy would not only advance racial and economic justice in New York City neighborhoods, but would also strengthen the city's ability to address serious challenges ranging from federal government to climate change in the coming years. Thank you so much for the opportunity to testify.

MS. GODSIL: Thank you for your testimony. What any commissioner like to ask any questions?

MR. SIEGAL: Good evening, John Siegal. I also am currently a member of the CCRB. So I've read quickly your proposal with great interest. I want to ask you a couple of questions about it. And I'm is not espousing a position on the proposal. It's actually the first I have seen of it this evening. First question is, it calls for a 21-member Commission. How do you propose if there were such a thing that a 21-member commission would actually hear and decide cases?

MR. HOLTZ: The legislation outlines guidelines for a panel that $I$ believe would be --

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN
have a quorum of at least three members who would reside over each case.

MR. SIEGAL: Because I will tell you we currently have panels of three, and the case discussions are often very in-depth, very fact-oriented and so that's why I asked that. Are you aware of any other government body, because you are proposing I think 17 district representatives and then four selected other ways where it doesn't really, to me, comport with one person, one vote.

Are you aware of any other government agencies that have district representatives and then add additional representatives from certain impacted districts?

MR. HOLTZ: I would have to ask the legislative team where they found that precedent. But for us, we think it makes a lot of sense because of the kind of asymmetrical, like, crisis of police accountability in certain districts, we really wanted to bump up representation in areas where police misconduct was, you know, really acute.

MR. SIEGAL: I understand the modicum of actually making it a practice including tonight

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN
which I'm skipping to have community (inaudible) with the highest greatest importance. One last point and I'm not here to defend the current system or to comment on your proposal because there are certainly real issues with the current system including most particularly the prohibition under Civil Rights Law 50A. that prevents citizens from knowing what's happening in a police disciplinary case unless and until it goes to trial which just makes no sense at all.

And I just want to comment on the independence. And it's just a comment. I'm not saying that more couldn't or shouldn't be done. I'm just going to say this. I have been on the CCRB for, I forgot how long, a year, year and a half. I'm designated by the mayor. I've never had a conversation about a case with anyone outside the CCRB. Nobody in the Mayor's Office has ever communicated with me about a case. I've never had any contact with anyone in the police department about a case. And I understand perfectly fair-game to question how people are appointed and what that means about independence. But I'm certainly sure that the factual determination case by case at this point is being

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN done independent of any political pressure or oversight, for what that's worth. I appreciate your interest and we will read through the proposal more carefully.

MS. GODSIL: Any other questions from the commissioners?

MR. HO: I just had a few questions as well about the proposal to establish an elected Civilian Review Board. It's the first time I've heard of this idea, too, so I'm just trying to understand some of the ideas here. I notice in the proposal about how to form the 17 districts, there are, it looks like specific city council districts have been chosen to cluster together. It's not just numerically one through three and four through six. And I was just wondering how the decision was made to cluster particular city council districts together for purposes of formulating the districts for this proposal.

MR. HIDALGO: My understanding is that it was just geographical. And as I referenced earlier, the assignment of extra representation for certain districts would happen for districts like really under a lot of strain of police misconduct, so East New York, certain areas of Staten Island.

MR. HO: Part of the reason I asked the question is one of the things $I$ look at in a redistricting plan is whether or not the plan will give adequate representation to different communities, particularly communities of color. And I was wondering if that had played into the decision to put these particular City Council districts together as opposed to these. But you are saying it's just geographic, not any sort of demographic analysis of city council districts to see what happens when you aggregate them together in threes?

MR. HIDALGO: I think our legislative team would be happy to answer that question with more clarity. I'm not sure exactly their criteria.

MR. HO: And then just one last question, sorry. I notice you propose to exempt elected board members from term limits under the City Charter, and I was just wondering what the thinking was behind that.

MR. HIDALGO: So we think in this type of community-driven effort in highly politicized races, we wanted to really prioritize community-run people. And we think that term
limits can hinder grassroots efforts, really get everyday people elected. So we thought once, you know, it takes a lot of resources for a community to run someone and for them to succeed. So if they are doing a good job, we think the continuity helps the board become effective.

MR. HO: Thank you.
MS. ARCHER: I was hoping you could talk a little bit more about what an Office of Cooperative Economics would do and how that will help address economic inequality.

MS. IWANISZIW: Sure. We will be submitting written testimony, too. We will definitely elaborate a lot more then. There's a lot of things a cooperative office will do. One of them right now is to coordinate across various city agencies and not-profit initiatives to support cooperative development in New York. So the idea is to get everything under one roof and coordinated. And there are some really strong examples in other cities including Montreal and Barcelona where those cities have created those offices to create success.

And more generally, we believe that cooperative economic development worker

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN cooperatives, financial cooperatives address issues of racial and economic injustice because they are controlled and led by the workers and by their members. And so the institutions operate for the benefit of the people who are participating in rather than being top-down. MS. ARCHER: Thank you.

MS. GODSIL: Any additional questions?
Thank you all so much for your testimony. Council Member Ben Kallos. Thank you so much for testifying. MR. KALLOS: Thank you. It's been a while since the shoe's been on the other foot. Good evening. I'm Council member Ben Kallos, @benkallos, K-A-L-L-O-S, on Twitter. I will say just to begin your executive director can testify to this, but my number one priority is and always has been campaign finance reform. Since its inception in 1988, New York City's had the model campaign finance system in the country. It's a system that has survived court challenges. It's been strengthened and perhaps weakened by legislative changes and helped candidates like me repeat and get elected.

It is a system I've invested in protecting and improving upon during my time in the City Council. But no system is perfect, especially not one as complex and impactful as the campaign finance. There is room for improvement. I offer to this Commission proposals large and small that will create a fair campaign finance system by shifting the power away from the wealthy and back towards the people it was designed to serve. I urge the Charter Revision Commission to consider modest changes to the existing campaign finance system will not put it at risk while still having a large impact. I am going to go through just the executive summary and hit on one specific item.

The first is to get big money out of New York City politics and power small donors. We can match every dollar with equal public match. This means increasing from a public match of 55 percent of the spending limit to 85 percent of the spending limit to match every small dollar. We can increase the match on small doors over big money. So that would mean matching small dollar contributions of $\$ 100$ or less at a higher rate than the larger contributions. We can lower contribution limits from current $\$ 4,950$ which is more than you can give to the President of the United States. You can only give the President 2,700. I'm recommending 2,000 for citywide across the board, 1,000 for City Council.

Another idea that folks really like because a lot of folks don't make enough to actually participate in the system is democracy vouchers. Another piece is we need to change this to a citizen legislature and empower residents to run for office. One idea is ballot access reform and allow people who qualify for public matching to get on the ballot automatically as an alternative to the archaic petition requirements.

We also need to end the revolving door between New York City and New York State with lifetime term limits. It's something that's worked in Los Angeles. Right now we are seeing musical chairs in the City Council. And in-district residency requirement, candidates under the New York State Constitution for legislature must live mere for five years in their district for one year. Currently there is no requirement. You just have the have to live here on the day of election.

We can empower the voices of residents over
big money. I have spent many hours arguing with your executive director or discussing how we can limit independent expenditures. There's room within Citizens United. And if you are interested in going big before going home, I would also recommend just going for clean money, clean elections.

And the last but not least, we are not too far into the process, what you recommend must be in effect for 2021. The next election after 2021 is 2029. There is a 98 percent incumbency rate. I think I will be -- my testimony is available at my website. You should have copies of my testimony in writing, but I will just leave you with one anecdote. Has any of you ever given anyone $\$ 4,950$ without expecting anything in return? I can tell you I've only given one thing worth more than $\$ 4,950$ to one person, and I expected her to spend the rest of her life with me. So there's that.

MS. GODSIL: All right. Nice anecdote.
Any questions from the commissioners?
So I will begin. You have a number of proposals and is sounds like more of the testimony I look forward to reading. Of the many proposals you have, if you had to identify the three you think would be most important, which would those three be?

MR. KALLOS: I would die on a hill for full public matching. As a City Council member who was turned down with 38 other City Council members, $I$ am terrified of 2021. I am terrified of 38 people running for offices and raising 3,850 or $\$ 4,950$ from people. And those dollars come from real estate. That's where it comes from. And if you ever want to wonder how did that neighborhood get so tall or how did those developments happen there, you can literally just follow the money of the people who needed to raise it to run for a higher office.

And I am petrified of elected officials selling out their communities for real estate contributions to their campaigns and what our city will look like coming out of the 2021 cycle, because this council and borough presidents all have a lot of power over the land use process. And I'm now planning dispositions and concessions chairing the Land Use Committee. And what I will tell you is we are not using New York City for city planning processes. We are using it to

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN
bring money and people are making billions. And that is a problem. Especially in the system where you have chosen your residents over real estate, I won't take that real estate money. And that means that I would probably need to go to 300, 000 people to ask for $\$ 10$ if I wanted to run for mayor. And even then, there is no more money. There's no public match. Like, it stops. And I will also tell you that if you don't reach your full maximum spending limit, you're not competing. Your name may be on the ballot, but that's it and you are getting nothing. So I would say that is number one with the bullet. And the other items in terms of lowering contribution limits I think that would limit the appearance of impropriety and increasing a match for smaller dollars might incentivize somebody if you had a ten to one match $\$ 100$, they would get $\$ 1,100$. That might be better than getting 175 which comes out to 1225. And we want to encourage people to get smaller dollars. It would also change what elected officials do. Right now they have this $\$ 3$ million hold when they want to run for mayor and -- sorry, it's two and a half million dollars. And so they are just
trying to find as many checks for $\$ 4,950$ they are spending half their time dialing for dollars trying to ask the people to given to every mayoral candidate before. And you want your elected officials spending time in the community, asking for $\$ 10$ contributions, not chasing people outside the district for checks for 9,540. Half the money raised in 2013 were checks the maximum amount under law. Guess what it was in 2017? Half again.

MS. GODSIL: Thank you.
Any other questions?
MS. WEISER: I have one question. Do you have any views on the spending limit? That should be changed or changed under any circumstances if that's sufficient?

MR. KALLOS: I know that some of my colleagues -- not colleagues, but some folks in good government and other places are concerned about independent spending and the fact that independent spending can outweigh spending limits. But in 2013, there was a lot of independent expenditure activity specifically by real estate. And those dollars did not have the same impact as when it was spent by a candidate.

I can tell you that having run a competitive race, $\$ 168,000$ was just about the right amount to send seven flights of mail -- sorry, ten flights of mail at which point the district was literally drowning in mail and saying please stop. We were getting calls: Please stop sending mail. And I have one of the larger mailing universes in the city. We were mailing to 18,000 households. We had 16,000 people vote. Many districts have less than 5,000 people voting. So 168, 182.

I didn't even expect that in my reelection. I think I spent a fraction of that. And $\$ 7$ million is an awful lot of money for communicating to folks. So I think that those numbers are just fine. And I don't think that the independent money had the same effect that other folks do.

MS. WEISER: Thank you.
MS. GODSIL: All right.
MR. SIEGAL: John Siegal. I appreciate your longtime advocacy on this issue. I guess I kind of think there isn't a really good reason to have higher contribution limits in city elections than in a statewide senate election or presidential election. However, could you comment on this?

If you reduce the contribution limit, don't you maximum the power and influence of people who can bundle a large number of thousand or $\$ 2,000$ checks which, by the way, is where the real money comes from?

MR. KALLOS: Good to see you, John.
Full disclosure: We have had the opportunity to work with each other over the years through the different Bar Associations, the City Bar Association in particular.

Bundling is part of democracy. One of the items that is something that I fought for and did die on a hill for, is that the city shouldn't match contributions that are bundled by people doing business with the city or lobbyists. And so we have seen a lot less bundling in 2017. If you check the Campaign Finance Board, there's just less of it happening today. If you create a full public match, this is going to get really esoteric very quickly, whenever you raise more money than is the maximum spending limit, you end up paying it back to the city.

So if you had a full public matching system, any time you got more than $\$ 175$ from somebody, if the City wrote you their full 85 percent match,
then what would end up happening is anything over 100 would get paid back to the city. So I would like to live in a world where people aren't bundling 1,000 and 2,000 or this current world of $\$ 5,000$ checks. I would prefer to live in a world where a community baseball team who is trying to raise their baseball club manager or parents all bundled, everyone on the team gives $\$ 10$ clean money, clean elections, or $\$ 100$ match ten to one.

Or you had interest groups of people from Sierra Club saying this person cares about the environment and everyone, all 31,000 members we are all going to do $\$ 10$ for this person and that's going to be 300.

I think that's how democracy should work.
And I think in terms of (inaudible) whose work I am a big fan of puts it, membership organizations are very different than special interests because special interests you have got money where one person with a lot of money can have a larger voice than many people with small dollars. So I would hope that you do see bundling, but from smaller amounts from many more people in communities of interest. Thank you. MS. GODSIL: One last question?

MS. ANGELO: Hi, Councilman, how are you?
MR. KALLOS: Good to see you.
MS. ANGELO: I thought I heard you say that you were somewhat troubled by elected officials after their term limit in the city go to the state and visa versa. Was I clear on that?

MR. KALLOS: So I ran against a sitting assembly member. They ran as an incumbent, nobody willing to support me, and we won. And I am not a fan of seeing people play musical chairs. So to my north, one of my colleagues Diana Ayala had to run against an assembly member and we won. And I know that Antonio Reynoso ran against an Assembly member; so did Carlos Menchaca. So you can win and in my case, there was a scandal that happened to the assembly member. In other cases it was an uphill push.

But in every other case, in 2017, you saw the assembly members coming in as very much all incumbents raising and spending, in one case, I think they spent a million dollars. And if you have these musical chairs where people are going back and forth, the communities never get an opportunity to have other representation. And it kind of defeats the whole purpose of term limits.

So Michael was talking about how in California people go from the State Assembly to the State Senate to the City Council which is the highest paid both here in and in Los Angeles and they move on. And the community gets people who are moving through the ranks. I don't think that the city is well served by people playing musical chairs.

And I think I believe in a citizen legislature. And it changes the way you make your decisions. If you are making decisions as an elected official based on where am I getting campaign contributions or what's my next job in government or in real estate, which is too many elected officials end up in real estate afterwards or what's my next elected officials job, what can the county organization give me, that's a different sort of elected official than you want.

You want somebody who has a profession, is from the community, and when somebody threatens them and says, if you do this, we don't support you for that office, if you do this, we won't give you campaign contributions, if you do that, we won't give you a job in the administration.

If the person is like, that's fine, I'm a lawyer, I will go back to practicing law and make a lot more money that way and I can sleep at night. I think that's a good thing. But musical chairs is bad for democracy.

MS. ANGELO: A specific proposal, how would you do that?

MR. KALLOS: You get to serve for two consecutive terms in an office, period, end of story. And because of the redistricting coming up in 2020, you would just have to say that for the definition of the district, it would be somewhere where there's 50 percent allowed because every redistricting you could argue well the district has changed. Let's just say no, if it comprises 50 percent of the same people. But you get to be a council member, once for two terms, you get to be a public advocate, once for two perms, borough president and so on, and you don't have folks coming back.

MS. GODSIL: Thank you so much, Council Member.

MR. KALLOS: Thank you so much for what you are doing. I can't wait. I tried to get this stuff through the City Council last time. And I

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN
hope again. I hope to beat you to the punch in the ballot in November, but if not, let's just make it happen however we can. Thank you.

MS. GODSIL: So we would like to invite Nancy Hanks, John Opdycke, Alvaader Frazier, and Alex Camarda. I will repeat that. Nancy Hanks, thank you.

Ms. Hanks? And I apologize for mispronouncing your name.

Could someone hand Ms. Hanks the mic microphone, please?

MS. HANKS: Hello, I'm Nancy Hanks. I live in Sunnyside, Queens, and I earn my living as a freelance grant writer for nonprofits. I'm a lifelong community organizer. I am the coordinator of the Queens Independence Club. And I am an American revolutionary. I stand for and will always stand for no taxation without representation. As a registered independent in New York, I am required to pay for participant primaries in which I am not allowed to vote.

We have a system in which certain voters are allowed to vote in the first round of a publicly funded election process, and others are not. It's wrong. It's unfair. Since I pay my taxes

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN
which fund partisan primary elections, I should be able to vote. No one should be forced to join a party just to be able to vote. Every American believes in our founding principle of no taxation without representation. And we need to enforce that principle today. This Commission could create a proposal for nonparticipant municipal elections to be voted on by the people of New York City asking whether everyone should be allowed to vote in the first round of voting regardless of whether they are registered to vote in a party or not.

I'm a strong believer in the rights of political parties to organize and even their assertion that as private associations, they should be able to decide how their nominees are chosen. However, they shouldn't have it both ways. If they function as private associations, then our collective tax dollars should not fund their private activities. Taxpayer funds should be used to benefit all our citizens and should fund an election process that benefits and includes all voters.

How do we justify funding a primary system in which the taxpayers fund democratic and

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN
republican primaries in New York City at a moment when there are over a million independents in the city which, by the way, is 300,000 more independents than Republicans in the city? Thank you.

MS. GODSIL: Thank you.
John Opdycke?
And please, everyone, correct me if I mispronounce your name.

MR. OPDYCKE: Yes. Good evening, Commissioners. My name is John Opdycke. I'm the president of Open Primaries which is a national advocacy group working to enact and protect open and nonparticipant primary systems of municipal state federal and presidential levels. Opponents of nonpartisan elections have frequently pushed back against advocates like myself by asserting, as Nancy said, that political parties have this unalienable right to determine who can and who cannot participate in the selection of their party nominees. We have already heard this at primary hearings.

And to be fair, these opponents are on legal grounds. The Supreme Court has ruled that when the purpose of a primary is to select a party

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN nominee, the parties can determine who can and cannot vote. But this argument, this party rights argument is actually misdirection and has nothing to do with your charge to improve democracy in New York City.

And let me elaborate on that. There's little distinction between primary elections and general elections. They take place at public schools and community centers. They are administered by public election officials. They are funded by taxpayers. It would make sense for the parties to vocally assert their First Amendment rights if they were conducting these internal party selection processes with their own money, their own time, their own methods.

And nowhere in the Supreme Court ruling did they assert that parties have the right to have their activities funded by the public. And also in New York City, the primary is the election. Let's just be very clear about that. Ninety percent of the races in New York City, the definitive election is the September primary, not the November election. Nine out of ten

New Yorkers live in a neighborhood in which the September election, not the November election,

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN decides who will represent them in City Hall and on the City Council. And that is how it is. And a growing number of New Yorkers are legally barred from participating in that process. One final or two final points. In 80 percent of the cities of this country, the word "primary" has a very different meaning. It means preliminary, not nominating contest. Most cities let voters vote, all voters vote in the first round of elections, whether that's primary election or general election or a general election in a run-off.

In most cities, the word "primary" has a very different meaning than how we use the word "presidential primary." Primaries are not nominating contests. They are preliminary elections and all voters get to participate in those. New York, to be very clear, is an outlier in how it conducts its municipal primaries.

And finally, you are considering a whole set of democracy innovations and reforms including the use of ranked choice voting. That's an innovative system that could work well in New York as it has in San Francisco and Minneapolis and other cities. But it's important to note that ranked choice voting has been enacted in cities that already have an open and equal system. In every city using ranked choice voting, independent voters are not locked down in the first round of voting. So ranked choice has been implemented by local reformers looking to improve systems that already treat voters equally.

So my recommendation to you is that you give ranked choice voting and other reforms and other innovations and projects a fair chance by pairing them with measures to create a level playing field for all voters and candidates and end this discrimination against independents.

MS. GODSIL: Thank you so much.
MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.
MS. GODSIL: Mr. Frazier?
MR. FRAZIER: Alvaader Frazier. Say it with me, "Alvaader."

MS. GODSIL: Thank you.
MR. FRAZIER: Good evening. Thank you, Commissioners, for the opportunity to address you tonight. My name is Alvaader Frazier, a longtime activist and independent political leader living in Harlem. I was active in the civil rights movement in my youth. I worked in the historic 1988 independent presidential campaign. I also worked very hard in 2003 in the 2003 attempt to pass nonpartisan elections for the City of New York. I speak to you tonight as the leader of the New York City Independence Clubs.

In New York City today, there are over one million voters who are independent of the Democratic or Republican parties. Closed party primaries are a severe expression of voter suppression, no less dangerous to our open democracy and poll taxes, purging voter rolls, and exclusionary voter ID laws. After the 2016 national presidential election, New York State was called one of the most draconian and outdated electoral systems in the whole of the United States.

Let me tell you some facts about New York City and who New York City's independents are. 25 percent of New York voters under 30 are independents. Ten percent of African-American voters and 16 percent of African-American voters under 30 are independents. Seventeen percent of Latino voters are independents with 25 percent of Latino voters under 30 registering as

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN
independents. Thirty-four percent of Asian voters are independent, with 36 percent of Asian voters under 40 becoming independents.

In New York City today, there are 384,880 more independent voters, so-called blind voters, than there are Republican voters. Yet we are barred from casting meaningful ballots in any primary. And in over 90 percent of these races in this city, the winner is determined by the outcome of the primaries. Since taxpayers pay for the primaries, independents face taxation without representation.

We have fought for centuries in the United States for voting rights for the African-American community, for women, and the fight is now focused on allowing independents to have full voting rights. No American should be forced to join a political party in order to be able to vote. This Charter Revision Commission could lead the way for independents to be fully included in our city elections through placing nonpartisan municipal elections on the ballot for the voters' consideration.

I urge you to follow most major cities in the United States that use nonpartisan elections and give every New Yorker the right to participate fully in the voting process. Thank you.

MS. GODSIL: Thank you very much.
Mr. Camarda?
MR. CAMARDA: Good evening, Commissioners. My name is Alex Camarda. I'm the senior policy advisor for Reinvent Albany, and I'm here tonight to discuss six recommendations we have on campaign finance reform and one recommendation we have pertaining to voting.

Our first recommendation on campaign finance reform is to consolidate the very disaggregated and fragmented system in New York City for overseeing not only campaign finance but ethics and lobbying and elections. We know of no other locality that has a more fragmented system than the one in the city. The city Clerk's Office oversees lobbying. The Conflicts of Interests Board oversees ethics laws. The Campaign Finance Board oversees campaign finance. The Elections Board oversees elections administration. And the Mayor's Office of Contracts Services oversees the Doing Business Database which also pertains to campaign finance.

So we would like to see consolidation of these administrative functions, ideally in one entity, that being the Campaign Finance Board. But at the very least, we think that lobbying oversight and regulation should be moved out of the city Clerk's Office into the Conflicts of Interest Board.

I can tell you that 35 other states, many of which are smaller than New York City, actually oversee ethics and lobbying. And in California, their centralized entity which is called the Fair Political Practices Commission, it's been in place for 40 years. It's often held up as the ideal, and it oversees all of those functions that I previously mentioned. So we think that would be something good that the Commission could do if it's inclined.

And it's also something that's really needed in New York and not often talked about, although I will mention that in 2010, the Charter Revision Commission at that time moved the Advisory Committee and the Campaign Finance Board and that's actually been a great success. So we have already made small steps in that direction.

Our second recommendation was covered by

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN

Council Member Kallos and previously by Represent Us and Common Cause, and that is to increase the public funds cap from 55 percent to 85 percent which is effectively eliminating it. We think that orienting candidates toward raising small donations from the beginning of their campaigns rather than seeking out the large contributions of $\$ 5,000$ for campaign money for mayor.

And along the same lines, our third recommendation is actually to only provide the six-to-one public matching funds for small contributions, those up to $\$ 175$ or something equivalent to that. I think it's not really widely known in the city except among candidates that run for office you are actually matched six to one on the first $\$ 175$ of any contribution. So if a candidate is running for office, there's a real incentive to just raise large contributions, get the match on 175, the first 175, and then not be inclined to raise money for smaller contributions.

And then lastly, I will wrap up here, we had two recommendations related to the Doing Business Database, expanding it to include clients and lobbyists as well as subcontractors which we

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN
think is just a fairness issue. We believe independent expenditures could be disclosed more greatly by revealing the owners of the limited liability companies which is something CFP supports.

And then lastly on voting, we support instant runoff voting. There's a bill that applies it for citywide office for special elections, and most importantly for military overseas voters. We think the city is actually vulnerable to a lawsuit on that. Military and overseas voters cannot vote in the runoff because there's not enough time for the Board of Elections to send them a ballot and have overseas voters complete it and send it back there two weeks. And that's something where other states have been sued and put in runoff voting.

MS. GODSIL: Thank you so much for your testimony.

Questions from commissioners?
MS. WEISER: I have two questions. One is for Mr. Opdycke, is that correct? And one is more Mr. Camarda.

For Mr. Opdycke, I understand your arguments relating to open primaries and independents. I'm wondering if there's any research on how open primaries impact party organizations that you are aware of?

MR. OPDYCKE: Political parties do wonderfully under a nonpartisan system. They organize. They raise money. They recruit candidates. They promote issues. There's absolutely no barriers to political parties fully participating in all the ways that they are designed to do. I think the biggest difference in a nonpartisan system is that those candidates representing these various parties are free to take their message to the total electorate instead of just members of their own party. And that process, I would argue, is very beneficial and very healthy.

But political parties themselves are in no way discriminated against by a nonpartisan system. It's much more about giving voters equal access than curtailing the First Amendment rights of political organizations be they parties or any other type of political organization.

MS. WEISER: My question for Mr. Camarda, you indicated that moving the Voters Assistance Advisory Commission to the Campaign Finance Board

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN was a success. I'm wondering if you can elaborate on that. There was somebody else who testified suggesting that it be moved into a new office and that it was less (inaudible). I would love to hear your thoughts on, you know, why that was a success and how it benefitted the functions of that office.

MR. CAMARDA: The Voters Systems Advisory Commission put out a report in the last week that details all of their work. And it revealed data that I have never seen before for the city showing trends in communities, voter registration. And they did an extensive outreach campaign and have done research on why people don't vote. I don't believe anything was done like that with that level of depth by the previous committee.

And I think it speaks to the value of consolidating these functions with one entity which is you have economies of scale. You save the city money. You pool expertise from people who work in this field, generally. And I think all of those things are beneficial not only for providing voter assistance and citizen engagement, but also for ethics and campaign
finance and lobbying enforcement.
MS. WEISER: And do you have a position on the proposals that have been raised for, like, an Office of Civic Engagement, how might that relate to some of these consolidated functions that you refer to?

MR. CAMARDA: That's not something we've looked at in particular. We have looked at the other states and other places and it seems that many, many places consolidate those functions in the very least ethics and lobbying oversight. So I think that would be a good first step. As I mentioned, I think California has been held up as the ideal, but there are other states and localities that actually have many of these functions under one roof.

MS. WEISER: Thank you.
MS. GODSIL: Any other questions?
MR. SIEGAL: Alex, could you explain to me what the proposal that you mentioned was about LLC ownership disclosure.

MR. CAMARDA: So I should really give credit to the Campaign Finance Board for this. And they put out a proposed election report every four years that has recommendations in it and we obviously go through these and take a look at them given their expertise. And so for independent expenditures, the most that we can do because of Citizens United and court cases that preceded it is we can require robust disclosure.

And what we find is that with independent expenditures, some independent expenditures that donors reveal under the city's system is just an LLC, a liability company. And so we don't know who the parent company is for that LLC or we don't know who the beneficial owner is of the LLC. And the CFD has independently done analyses that are in their 2013 report, for example, but it takes time. The information is provided after an election cycle, so it's not useful to voters before they vote.

And we know that in state election law there are provisions that say the true donor of the contribution must be provided. And so we think requiring that to the extent the city can do so legally under the law in the Charter is something that would be consistent with state election law. MR. SIEGAL: Thank you.

MS. GODSIL: Any other questions?
Thank you all so much for your testimony.

We would like to invite Sol Erdman, Jackie Salit, Alison Hirsch, and Felix Figaro.

So Sal Erdman, please.
MR. ERDMAN: Thank you all so much. Thank you for allowing me to speak to you today. I am the founder of Center for Collaborative Democracy. Our purpose is to try and promote instructive resolution of very large divisions. As everybody in this room is very well aware, this country is now in the midst of perhaps the most polarizing type of politics any of us have seen in our lifetimes,

Now, New York City may have less of that because this is, well, let's face it, pretty much a one-party town. But that doesn't change the fact that most elections, especially competitive elections, are mostly negative campaigning. If you have two top candidates for any office, the easiest way to win is simply to undercut the other candidate because to make a coherent argument for a complex set of policy issues requires an attention span that most voters don't usually have.

There is, however, a proven technique for almost eliminating the benefits of negative

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN campaigning, and that's ranked choice voting. Seventeen cities have adopted it. The state of Maine is about to adopt it, we hope, in June. The results have been in the cities that have adopted it that the way to win is to run an issue-based campaign and to build a broad coalition of voters across the spectrum, not necessarily the entire spectrum, but a very broad swath of it.

New York City is in a sense behind the curve on that. Why would this city which is the leader in so many areas not want to adopt a method of voting basically to reward candidates talking issues, trying to build coalitions across social, economic and political lines and will result in candidate the who win being much more accountable? That is, in the next election, where each candidate is elected face a lot more competition and those have the opportunity to rank candidates from their first choice to last, the candidate makes more promises and doesn't deliver is much more likely not to win the next time around.

To be candid, those of you who are familiar with ranked choice voting know it's a little more
complicated than the elections just pick one candidate. But that, using that as an argument to not use it is like the argument we should have stopped the horses and not gone to cars and subways and so on.

There really is an opportunity for the Commission to make a significant difference in the way city politics run. And I urge you all to be in favor of ranked choice voting. Thank you. MS. GODSIL: Thank you.

Jackie Salit?
MS. SALIT: Good evening, Commissioners, my name is Jackie Salit. I'm the president of Independent Voting which is a national organization that represents independent voters. I wanted to use my time this evening to bring three issues to your attention. But I also wanted to begin by saying that I appreciate your work and that I think you have a very, very hard job.

I was listening as Commissioner Godsil gave the mandate from the mayor in terms of the focus of this Commission leading to how democracy works. I think we all know the answer to that -not well. And what we are talking about here tonight is in certain circumstances what we can do to address that, so I wanted to share some thoughts on that topic with a recognition that some of these things are a heavy lift because there's been a very long tradition of maintaining a certain kind of political status quo in this city.

But I think the pressure is coming from the general mood both in the country and the state, and the city requires some more open-minded thinking about directions to go in. The first issue that $I$ want to raise here, frankly, I was not originally planning to speak to you about tonight, but given the events in Albany over the last 48 hours and I think just a tremendous sense of distress and helplessness on the part of the voting public with respect to the behavior of elected officials in this state and the difficulty in holding them accountable, the level of protection that goes on within the political system is just abhorrent.

I want to propose that one of the issues that the Commission take up in your consideration for democracy reform is the mayor has requested is the issue of recall. I think that the voters

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN
of New York City should have the right to directly recall elected officials. They don't currently have that right under the city Charter. But I think the level of frustration that the public feels with how elected officials are allowed to operate and the difficulty in calling them to account makes the issue of recall a very important and frankly a front-line issue for people concerned with democracy to consider.

The second issue that I wanted to bring to your attention and ask you to consider which is related to the recall issue is the initiative process itself in New York City. We are fortunate in New York because, unlike the rest of the state, we actually have the right to initiative and referendum so that the voters can initial elevate changes to the City Charter on their own without having to go through the legislature, except for the fact that when the City Charter was written, the right to initiative and referendum was dramatically curtailed by first requiring that citizens present their petitions to the City Council, then go back out onto the street if the City Council doesn't act. And further, the mayor then has the right to

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN
preempt actions taken through the citizen initiative process. Let's get rid of all of those little interruptions and control mechanisms and just let the people of New York City have the direct route to citizens initiative on the ballot.

The third question that I want to raise for you very briefly, the prior panel spoke extensively about the question of nonpartisan primaries and open primaries, the independent voter. The statistics were presented to you. Here is what I don't understand. I don't understand how the mayor -- I don't understand how the City Council can ignore the fact that there are one million independents in the City of New York and are not prepared to do something to empower those voters.

I ask all of you, the mayor has appointed you to look at this issue. I ask you tonight if you can to speak to the issue of how you see those voters. What are you prepared to do for nearly one million voters who are disenfranchised under the current system? Thank you.

MS. GODSIL: Thank you so much.
Alison Hirsch?

MS. HIRSCH: Good evening, Vice Chair. Good evening, Vice Chair Godsil and members. Thank you for the opportunity to testify here tonight and for your effort as well as holding these hearings. My name is Alison Hirsch and I'm the vice president and local director of 32BJ. Our union is made up of 163,000 men and women who make their living in property services.

Here in the city, our 85,000 members work hard to keep residential buildings, schools, offices, stadiums and airports safe and complete. Our members hail from over 60 countries and speak dozens of languages. But we are proudly united in our fight to ensure that all workers along with the families and the communities to which they belong have the opportunity to thrive and live with community respect.

Throughout these hearings we have heard many valuable suggestions to strengthen our democracy in New York City. On behalf of our membership, I encourage you to give them your fullest consideration. In order for government to be responsive to the needs of all people, it's essential that the broadest coalition of voices possible is able to be heard in the democratic

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN process. If participation in our electoral is narrowed, so too are the interests to which government is held accountable. Cities can lead the way in fighting back against these efforts to exclude voters and ensure that the electoral campaign laws within their jurisdiction is clearly written to promote participation and inclusion.

Our union works not only to empower our members on the job, but also to serve as a vehicle for civic engagement so that our members can come together and fight for common interests. The current city finance laws, however, impede the ability of members to communicate with one another about elections.

For example, the expenses the union incurs to organize member-to-member canvasses is counted as a campaign contribution if the candidate is briefed by the union is present to speak to members beforehand. If the union reaches its maximum contribution limit, we then face the options of either limiting member-to-member engagement from the race all together, denying members a valuable opportunity to meet with and be inspired by a candidate, or pursue

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN alternatives such as media buys as independent expenditures.

32BJ in the past mobilized our members to join in efforts. The members were engaged and inspired by their contact with the candidate and broader campaign. Now our efforts are made through the independent expenditures isolated from those candidates. As Felix Figueroa who will speak next can attest, this is confusing and frustrating to our members and is actually a disincentive to their active participation in the democratic process. Other units have gone so far as to give up mobilizing their members all together with some paid media for door knocking and phone banking in communities.

32BJ has a more detailed submission how the law ham strange the ability to engage union brothers and sisters in the political process. Our submission includes a specific recommendation to suitably amendment the Charter to promote member-to-member communication.

In addition, I wish to briefly touch on several other democracy enhancing initiatives that are in effect elsewhere in America that we recommend the Commission can start for New York.

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN

One, allow early voting. Voting in person at a polling place on a Tuesday can be a major impediment to the participation of working people in the election process. These barriers are particularly acute for low-income workers who have less control over their work and personal schedules. Simply opening polling places prior to election day and allowing people to vote when they could would allow people to get to their voting and have their voices heard.

Two, allow same-day voter registration. The public's engagement of elections including their understanding of the issues of the state assessment of the candidacies on the ballot bills --

MS. GODSIL: Could I ask you to summarize?
MS. HIRSCH: Sorry. I will skip ahead. Same-day voter registration, simplify the nominating process so that it is actually easier to get on the ballot and run for office. It's confusing. Magnify small donor contributions which I think has been spoken to ad nauseam today. And we support that. Consider adding base grants. The idea of base grants and finance laws, those are two programs put in place

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN
recently enacted in Washington, D.C. campaign finance laws. And also consider enacting democracy vouchers, a new program that Seattle place recently for the 2017. Thank you so much. MS. GODSIL: Mr. Figueroa? MR. FIGUEROA: Good evening, Commissioners. My name is Felix Figueroa. I am a 32BJ Long Island City, Queens residents and community activist. I am passionate about my union and my neighborhood. Each year I get involved in elections work like door knocking, giving out fliers, phone banking to fight for issues that I think will make New York great. I work closely with Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer who is a personal friend. I think he stands up for our communities and I like that he wants to involve more young Hispanics from Queens in political process.

Campaign finance laws, member-to-member communication make it hard for me to get other union members active to support Jimmy or any other candidates. If the union organized a member-to-member canvassing, the cost is counted as a campaign contribution. If the candidate has been briefed by the union and is presented to

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN
talk to members, this is a shame. Basically young, young people who are disconnected from politics need candidates to feel inspired and to trust that they will fight for them. Because I am active in both, my union and my community, these laws can feel confusing to me.

During last year's election, there were certain things I couldn't talk about with Jimmy. There were certain events, even certain events Jimmy had that $I$ couldn't go to. I shouldn't have to decide between campaigning with my union and supporting a candidate $I$ believe in. I want to see changes in the Charter that will make sure union members, members-to-members communication is not counted as a contribution. That will help me better talk with members $I$ know and to get more of them active to help this process.

MS. GODSIL: Thank you so much.
Any questions from the Commission?
MS. ANGELO: I'm not sure who would be able to answer this, but are the laws, campaigning finance laws directed at unions the same as those that are directed at a corporation?

MS. HIRSCH: In some ways yes; in some ways no. And I think the bottom-line issue is there

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN has sort of historically often been a false equivalency between corporate charitable and union employee members. Union members are, you know, they it's a voluntary association. It's, there are really part of one collective organization in a way that, you know, a corporation doesn't have the same kind of -- it's not -- they are just not the same.

And corporations union members pool their resources to move political action or their collective bargaining action, whereas a corporation is a for-profit entity that generally a few people control.

MS. SEECHARRAN: My question is for Jackie. I wonder if you could elaborate on your recommendation around recall of those elected office.

MS. SALIT: Well, I think the spectacle that we are seeing in Albany right now is a situation where you have, you know, a very significant violation committed by an elected official. And then you have a legislative body and the party organizations trying to figure out how to get themselves off the hook and replace this person in such a way as so that they don't lose any
political power off of that shift. And this in the face of, you know, fairly egregious actions by the former Attorney General.

I think the recall issue, first of all, the right to recall is a fundamental progressive reform which gives the voters an opportunity to judge and to hold elected officials accountable in between elections. I think it becomes all the more urgent and the reason $I$ bring it up today is because there's such a sense that there's so much self-dealing that goes on within legislative bodies and within political parties that even holding elected officials accountable when they violated the law is a compromised process.

And so I think the argument for recall which is really a basic democracy argument becomes all the more compelling given the levels of corruption and self-dealing that go on.

MS. SEECHARRAN: So who would initiate the recall?

MS. SALIT: You would initiate it by a petition process. Yeah, yeah. And, you know, there were in the 1990s, there was an effort through the initiative, citizens initiative process to bring recall before the voters which
did not make it all the way to the ballot booth. So there's already been draft language that has been looked at for how such a process would take place. We could look at that and look at other versions of that as well.

MS. SEECHARRAN: Thank you.
MS. GODSIL: Any additional questions? MS. WEISER: One further question for Ms. Hirsch and Mr. Figueroa, which is can you elaborate a little bit precisely how restricting member-to-member communication or ensuring that member-to-member communications are independent expenditures reduces engagement to members, how that functions?

MS. HIRSCH: Sure. So first I would say that, you know, in federal elections, you compare the city elections to federal ones. Federal elections, member-to-member communications are not considered able to, you know, organize volunteer activity from your members coordinating with the candidate. And so the impact is that our primary work, and I can speak for most federal elections, the primary work we engage in is talking to members about the importance of candidates, trying to introduce them to those

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN
candidates, recruit volunteers on a Saturday or a Sunday to go to those candidates' office and participate in volunteer activities, knock on doors, all of that work.

Now, any cost associated with that, you know, ends up having to be a contribution whether it's, you know, paying for food or a van or things like that. But the act of communicating with our members and talking to our members and introducing them to candidates is not -- is separate and apart from any contribution limit. In the city that's not the case. In the city, any communication we have to our member, we have to quantify staff time, material, all of those things. And so what we have seen happen since this was really enacted in post 2009 since the interpretation that the Charter -- this was the interpretation is in 2013 and 2017 even more so, most unions decided, you know, if we are going to have to do an independent expenditure anyway in order to engage at all in this election, then it's probably, like, we will get more credit and we will do, you know, be seen more probably if we are just spending a lot of money on media and spending our cash instead of

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN
focusing on talking to our members and encouraging them to volunteer and educating them about the process and introducing them to their Council members and candidates, et cetera.

And so I think it's actually created a perverse incentive away from focusing on what we should be focused on which is engaging our own members in the democratic process. Because if you can't -- members don't go to campaign offices or can't be seen, then you're not sort of building that kind of relationship between members or the union and candidates. And so we try to make a splash.

MS. WEISER: Thank you.
MR. BRAGG: So I'm confused. Are you
talking about the expenses for the union to communicate with the members, or are you talking about the expenses that the union has to communicate with members in a situation where there are nonmember participants?

MS. HIRSCH: I'm simply talking about unions communicating with members. So we currently, you know, we have 85,000 members in New York City. You know, to send one piece of mail to all 70,000 of those are registered to vote, so send one

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN piece of mail to 70,000 voters obviously breaks every contribution limit in the city. And so what we often will do is in our mail or communications and at worksites we will send staff to worksites, or Felix has often come off of the job as a member organizer. He leaves his worksite and for a month or two at a time will work for the union, but being paid for by the union, work for the union doing political engagement and outreach to members.

So what he will do is -- Felix, correct me if I am wrong -- you go to a worksite and talk about the importance of city elections that are coming up. And that's why it's so important to volunteer. And so we don't pay our members to volunteer. We ask them to do that on their own time. So once that act, according to the New York City, the current interpretation of the campaign finance laws in New York City would be considered an in-kind contribution if any member that Felix speaks to to volunteer goes on his or her own time to someone's office on a Saturday.

MR. BRAGG: Very detailed. Let me speak to you offline. I don't think I'm up to date. MS. GODSIL: Any additional questions?

Thank you all so much.
So we would like to invite Melissa Appleton, Ilana Cohen, E. Beers-Dimitriadis, and Katherine Molina-Powell. If anyone has written testimony you would like to distribute, obviously please feel free.

So Ms. Appleton?
MS. APPLETON: Good evening. Thank you for your time and attention. My name is Melissa Appleton. I work in the Participatory Budgeting Project as a project manager and for the past three cycles, I've supported New York City council's PB process. On Monday you probably heard my colleague Josh Learner, our co-executive director, speak about why the Commission should support the proposal that goes beyond traditional elections, in particular for an Office of Civic Engagement and for citywide PB.

I just want to say a little bit more about how and why we think citywide PB could work. And to start, I want to frame this by looking at its track record. PB is a proven way to make political participation more inclusive. We know that PB voter participation has been more representative of city demographics than for
traditional elections. It's been recognized as a best practice for good governance by the former White House and by Harvard. And when PB started in New York City seven years ago, it was an experiment, but it worked. And when experiments work, you expand them. You apply them more broadly, which is why we believe this should be institutionalized in the Charter Revision.

And lastly, while 100,000 people or so voted in City Council's PB process each year, we hear consistently that they want to have more impact to be able to make bigger and more meaningful decisions. If the city wants people to trust government, we believe that the city needs to place its trust in the residents and share real power. So for those reasons, we are proposing that at least one percent of the city budget be allocated to PB to build on the current council-level process and the school process the DOE is launching.

This would enable residents to vote on projects for their schools, districts, borough, and city. The funds should be for both capital and expense. People have important and innovative ideas for both and especially for

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN
low-income communities being able to fund vital programs and services will ensure PB can address the most pressing needs. This following precedents from cities like Seattle and Boston that do have citywide PB processes and cities like Paris that have invested significantly no are in participatory budgeting.

In Paris, a city that has about a quarter of our population, residents allocate about 100 million Euros every year. And lastly when there's a central mandate and support for PB, we see the quality of ideas tend to improve. It's difficult and resource-intensive for Council members and Council offices to run this process successfully, and we see it works best with dedicated central support. So our organization would be happy to speak with you more and help if there is anything that would further your work, Commission. Thank you so much for your time. MS. GODSIL: Ilana Cohen?

If you just want to go along the line.
MS. COHEN: Good evening, members of the Commission and members of the public. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Ilana Cohen and I'm a high school senior. I am also
the founder and co-facilitator of the Participatory Budgeting Youth League, a student-led and organized group working to increase youth voter engagement to participatory budgeting process based in Council District 39.

My experience with PB youth and other student-organized platforms has affirmed the following: New York City students are already making change. Yet there are clear ways our city government can and should support us in these efforts.

One such way is by establishing an Office of Civic Engagement. Already New York City suffers from low voter turnout. Fewer than 15 percent of registered voters showed up to cast their ballots in the primary election last September. This poor turnout is indicative of disinterest and distrust of city government. There's also a misconception that the extent of one's civic duty as a city resident is casting one's ballot when elections come around.

Our democratic process extends far beyond voting and politics and relies upon fostering closer relationships between City agencies and their constituents. Establishing an office

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN dedicated to engaging New Yorkers and public initiatives would help redefine a broader sense of civic duty, integrating civic engagement into the fabric of our everyday lifers. More than the one-time act of casting a ballot, city residents could shape the institutions that shape our daily experiences in time.

An Office of Civic Engagement could also support and extend the work of New York City students. Whether it be the public education or transportation or housing systems, students' daily experiences are shaped by the city civic institutions as are those of our parents. Yet student voices are ignored by both representatives and government agencies because they are excluded from the voting booth.

However, falling below the voting age does not stop students from developing their own initiatives and making their beliefs known. Our students are facilitating PBNYC processes, organizing student turnout and fighting for citywide school integration. We are civically minded and passionate, but many of us are not public schools. Those students for whom opportunities to engage are not readily available

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN
would be able to find opportunities while already active students can find new resources and connections through an Office of Civic Engagement. Such an office would not only prepare new students to become change-makers in their local communities, but also equip our city's future voters with a more intimate understanding of city issues and civic structures.

Furthermore, an Office of Civic Engagement could help support and expand PBNYC, a process emblematic of democracy. PBNYC grants students a voice at as early as age 11. It also involves noncitizens or felons and people who are not registered to vote in either state or federal elections. In other words, it invites the voices of those who might otherwise be excluded from government processes into civic decision-making with their neighbors, uniting New Yorkers of diverse backgrounds and interests.

And the process also prioritizes inclusivity, encouraging residents to use the resources that the their disposal to positively impact our community. An Office of Civic Engagement could help engage more residents in
the PBNYC process and potentially launch new PB pilot programs.

To this end, taking part in the City agency as elected officials and nonprofit organizations news an Office of Civic Engagement can bolster both individual civic participation and overall engagement in the city's local democratic processes. With this office, New York City can continue to serve as a beacon of activism and engagement for the rest of the nation. Thank you.

MS. GODSIL: Thank you so much.
MS. BEERS-DIMITRIADIS: Good evening, Commissioners. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of establishing an Office of Civic Engagement and expansion of participatory budgeting citywide. I'm Heather Beers-Dimitriadis, president of the Citywide Committee Participatory Budgeting and have served as a participatory budget delegate to City Council District 29 over the last three cycles on the Education Committee.

This year our district saw an increase in community participation resulting in 3,300 votes. Eight hundred and eighty of those came from
first-time voters and Russell Sage Middle School, JHS 190. As this year, the voting age was increased to 11 years old. I echo the sentiments from Monday evening's hearing. Young voters form habits that last a lifetime. Participatory budgeting gets students voting earlier and more frequently reinforcing habits that we hope will last a lifetime, habits that will go a long way to addressing the voter turnout concerns of everyone in this room.

Participatory budgeting impacts civic engagement by engaging voters in decision-making and problem-solving that directly impacts their communities whether it be in the fall when communities gather to brainstorm new and creative ways to improve their community or in the winter when select committees meet to turn those ideas into projects that by spring find their way on to ballots.

Throughout this process, residents turn into community advocates. This year my community voted for bus countdowns, public school bathroom renovations and public school water fountains and water refill stations. Eight schools in all stand to see improvements due to the exercised

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN
voice of my community. Participatory budgeting essentially moves civic engagements from the halls of government into the streets of our communities. Throughout the participatory budget process, a more educated voter and a more invested voter is created.

As projects go to city agencies for approval, you learn the lessons of limitations. You learn how to work collaboratively with these agencies. You gain a deeper appreciation of what is required to make a capital project happen. As you see the project through from conception to ballot to selection, you become invested in seeing this project through to fruition.

Over the past three years, the most rewarding part of the participatory budget process has been seeing people vote on final projects. This year I handed a ballot to a new U.S. citizen who got to cast her first vote ever. There was also the excitement in a 12 -year-old's face when he realized that yes, he could vote.

And then there are the moments when people want to vote, but then realize their district is not participating this year. I would encourage the Commission to consider expanding

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN participatory budgeting citywide, giving all communities a voice in how funds are spent to improve their neighborhoods.

And in the spirit of nonpartisan cooperation and as the establishment of an Office of Civic Engagement would facilitate this expansion in an efficient manner. Thank you, Commissioners, for your time this evening. I believe strongly in participatory budgeting. It gives voice to the voiceless, allowing the residents not simply citizens to have a say. It takes democracy out of City Hall and pushes it into our communities. Again, thank you for your time.

MS. GODSIL: Thank you so much.
MS. MOLINA-POWELL: Good evening, my name is Katherine Molina-Powell. I am speaking today about participatory budgeting and advocacy for the creation of an Office of Civic Engagement, focused mostly on the process of PB as my peers here at the table, but also I am speaking today as a community member as a PB volunteer. I'm a resident of the Bronx participating office in the district team in the last few years. This last year I've also joined the citywide committee to help coordination across New York City.

I've lived in New York since 2001, in the Bronx since 2011. Both my children are Bronx residents. And I am really invested in seeing the kind of engagement and thriving, active, thoughtful participation in the democratic processes that I have seen through this process almost exclusively. I've experienced voting again in New York since the early 2000s. And I think traditional voting for me has seemed very -- it's been challenging as you heard from former folks who have been up here speaking.

It's a process that requires a lot of time, a lot of effort and a lot of, frankly, bureaucracy that we don't necessarily have to see. And I have never seen in my time in New York anything on the level of passion and local engagement that $I$ have seen in my time of working on the PB projects in New York. As an volunteer, $I$ have seen this truly amazing process where community members and stakeholders have come together directly to collaborate how to invest the funds that have been allocated for this process.

And every step in this process from the creation of ideas to the work and research at the
delegate level, so the vetting and the creation of the ballots, the ultimate vote of all these ideas has been a step that promotes the thoughtful and enthusiastic engagement of local residents around concrete ideas for the communities that we live in that we exist in and that affect our daily lives.

Delegates and people who are really involved in this tend to be local community advocates for nonprofits or just very, very involved in our communities. Sometimes, sometimes not representative sort of a larger group of people within the district. These delegates do a tremendous amount of work and I think the important part that $I$ have seen speaking as a delegate and volunteer has been the ability of the delegates to lift our heads above our single or sort of dual issue thoughts and actually start to collaborate with our peers with other local activists and leaders about how we can build a total system of improvement and look for opportunities to invest effectively in our communities.

It's a really great collaborative experience that doesn't necessarily have another forum to
happen. There's been a lot of talk about making democracy better in this -- in tonight's forum and in the other forums that happened. I think this is really the place that you can actually invest in a strategic way to see that happen across all age groups and across all demographics in the city. And I really hope that you will give this the significant consideration that it deserves.

MS. GODSIL: Thank you so much.
Any questions from the commissioners?
MS. MIROCZNIK: My question is directed to Ms. Cohen. First of all, I want to thank you for coming out with the exact example of engagement that we need as a city and society. You have to be thanked. My question to you, Ms. Cohen, is, in school, was this done by the councilmanic from the 39th District Council person? Was the school principal and teacher on board? Was this part of a civics class? If yes or no, what should the schools be doing to encourage this?

MS. COHEN: So the Participatory Budgeting Youth Committee is not school-based. I interned for Council Member Lander and founded it years ago with some friends. Since then we have been
able to reach out across the city to students across the city and different boroughs. And I think PB should be expanded both on a citywide level in terms of city council districts and also in schools which is part of the civics -- sorry, am I answering your question? Yes, was this about this specific committee or about what type of expansion of PB?

MS. MIROCZNIK: You answered perfect.
MS. SPEAKER: Okay.
MS. MIROCZNIK: My main concern is civics in school in class --

MS. SPEAKER: Yeah.
MS. MIROCZNIK: -- history class, civics
class. Are the teachers and the principal in the school encouraging young people like yourself to come out and engage in participatory budget so you can have civic engagement? Like testifying tonight, it's not easy sitting in the hot seat in a crowded room testifying coming from Brooklyn tonight. Who is encouraging you to do it? It's a wonderful thing.

MS. COHEN: My council member is a wonderful. I have a really supportive school environment. But to be honest, I think New York

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN

City Public Schools, in my experience, are incredibly lacking in terms of civic engagement. I mean, we learn about the founding of the national Constitution, but we learn nothing about state or city government, which is why I love participatory budgeting, because anyone can get involved and you can vote starting at age 11. And I have seen middle school students my little sister get involved themselves. And I think it provides a level of civic education that honestly could be implemented in the public school system. So while that wasn't directly in my testimony, I think an Office of Civic Engagement could seriously help with that initiative in fostering better relationships between city agencies, public schools and ensuring that students are opened up to these types of students, especially because I come from Brooklyn from Park Slope and I go to school in Midtown Manhattan. So I see a lot of more of these opportunities than many of my peers do in other areas of the city, and I think they should have equal opportunity and access to them. MS. MIROCZNIK: Answered my question as with the schooling, and you corroborated my thoughts regarding the right to vote. I appreciate the comments.

MS. SPEAKER: Do you mind if I added on to that? It was my experience students of this age could vote. I rolled it out at my children's school. I have twin 11-year-olds. And I think to completely reinforce it, at this school, they nearly did the voting as a sort of task, a homeroom task. And I think that was unfortunate because I think looking at her, she is a mindful young woman who understands what she is voting for. And that's what we want to raise up.

And I think we have an opportunity in our schools to do that. And I think if we worked with the DOE to implement this as a part of a civics or a social studies class where they understand more and they are mindful, then we are able to really grow this and we are able to have a generation that will actually think about what they are doing and are more mindful of what the impact of their actions are. So I would say that we are lacking there right now, but I think that's partly because this is the first year we have had voters who were 11.

MS. GODSIL: Any additional questions from commissioners?

MS. ANGELO: Can you tell me how many council districts are participating in the participatory budgeting?

MS. SPEAKER: The question is how many council districts are participating? There's 27 this year. It's been up to 31 in the past. But because the political transitions this year, that number changed. More than half the city, but there's a lot of room for growth. I would also like to see this beyond the council level.

MS. GODSIL: Thank you all so much. Very impressive.

So we would like to invite Roxanne Delgado, Cristina Gonzalez, Frank Morano, and Jenny Akchin.

You want to go first, Ms. Delgado?
MS. DELGADO: Okay, hi. I would just like to say the issue -- I'm sorry, the issue isn't voter registration or education. It's a lack of competition where even before the race begins, most people know the outcome. The campaign finance has made races less competitive, and as a result there's a lower voter turnout. As I stated last week, there has been lots of abuses

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN of campaign matching funds. In the case with City Council Member Ben Kallos took over 125,000 in public funds even though he outraced his combined opponents by over 2,000 percent. His opponents didn't receive any public money and he won reelection by over 80 percent.

There are some city council members who want to increase the gap in such scenarios by increasing the matching funds or fully financing these races. Not only does that increase the gap between established and grassroots candidate, but it's a waste of money. The way to stop this abuse is by not matching any race with other opponents not eligible for public funds and raise 50 percent less than their opponent.

And then I would like to say quickly also regarding special elections, over half of the elected officials came into office through special elections certain voters so this also needs to be ended because there's too many people don't vote because they realize that the system is already rigged.

Regarding community boards, I support term limits for community board members because in some districts it's very hard to find people who

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN are free time or interest in serving on the board. However, I do support term limits for community board leadership to two terms so other members can have a chance to lead as well. Community board members with poor attendance should be automatically removed from the board and not at the discretion of the other community board members.

Currently I have board members who have over 90 percent attendance failure but still are on the Board because they are political appointees. And a community board should not be allowed to vote on any issue not on the agenda at last 24 hours before the meeting. This happened in my community board.

And lastly regarding the ranked choice voting, I think that I would recommend you to cause a low turnout, lowering the 40 percent of the vote threshold to 30 percent of the vote in citywide races to avoid runoff because the Board of Elections is too inept to handle ranked choice voting. They don't have the funds and they are just inept. Thank you.

MS. GODSIL: Thank you.
MS. GONZALEZ: Hi, good evening. Thank you

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN
for having us today and giving us the opportunity to testify. My name is Cristina Gonzalez. I'm one of the co-founders of Women of Color for Progress. We are a multi-strategy organization that works to create more transparency and equity in our government to allow women of color to excel, lead, and be heard in government.

While we have presented a few proposals regarding land use, housing, transparency, I'm here today to testify on and speak on the expansion of paid leave specifically as it pertains to paid parental leave and bereavement leave. Our first proposal is to expand parental leave to all City employees. As it currently stands, only 20,000 of the currently -- of the employees in the city qualify for paid parental leave, even though there are over 294,000 full-time City employees.

In the year between 2015 and 2017 that we had paid parental leave, only 436 people who qualified for paid parental leave actually accessed it, which is only two percent of the 20,000 people that qualify for it. Expanding it would mean that people who are teachers, City employees that are unionized members would be

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN
able to access paid parental leave and not have to utilize paid sick days or vacation days if they had to go for parental leave.

I would additionally like to expand bereavement leave, specifically the part that -the way that family is identified. So as it stands, every agency gets to define what is family. So if you have a death in the family, that means if your agency does not cover that, like your grandparent, you have to also utilize your vacation time to bereave your family member.

So we are proposing that this term of families that hasn't really been revised since 2004. And obviously the way that we view families has changed in the 14 years since we have revised the term to expand these different definitions of family to further grant these rights, to access the bereavement leave.

And we are also proposing that this definition of family also extend to sick leave so that if someone needs to take care of their family member, the way that we define family is also expanded for that as well.

MS. GODSIL: Thank you so much.
MR. MORANO: Good evening, Commissioners. My name is Frank Morano. Thank you for the opportunity to be heard this evening. You were so kind to thank us for coming out here. Thank you for all the work that you have done. I think anybody that's watched the Charter revision process not only this year but previously years knows the endless amounts of time, effort, and energy that you guys put into this without getting paid, without becoming famous, and a lot of times it seems thankless. But thank you. It is appreciated by those of you that are working towards making democracy a bit better.

I wanted to -- I heard a lot of great ideas today and I am going to try and not repeat too much of what other folks said. And for other similar ideas that folks mentioned, I want to emphasize a couple of different reasons that I think you should consider them.

With respect to campaign finance, which I know a lot of people have spoken about and you've indicated you are exploring a number of solutions, you know, I really do want to dispel the notion that the current campaign finance system is working in New York City. It is absolutely not. It was designed to make it

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN
easier for regular people to run for office. It has done completely the opposite. It has done nothing but become -- but create a new cottage industry of accountants, of lawyers, consultants, and people that know how to game the system in order to fill out the right forms and match properly with the right donors.

If you are a regular person trying to navigate the morass of the campaign finance system in this city, you are rewarded with fines for innocuous mistakes and hours and hours' worth of paperwork in which you can spend campaigning. It is absolutely impossible to do that. Additionally, the same people end up as the donors. Regular people don't end up donating to grassroots candidates.

Instead, what I would suggest, and Council Member Kallos alluded to this, is a proposal similar to what Seattle has done with democracy vouchers. Maybe start it on a pilot level here in New York City where rather than go to the same real estate and financial services industries for the same donors, instead give every New Yorker $\$ 250$ vouchers that they can use to contribute to any campaign. If they choose not to use it, it's not used. But what it does is it forces all of these candidates to go to regular people, not big money bundles.

Additionally, I know you've heard a lot of talk about ranked choice voting. One area beyond the case of saving the cost of a whole separate second runoff election that $I$ urge you to consider is you guys have the opportunity to absolutely abolish that term spoiler in city elections.

If you listen to the discussion of the governor's race right now, everyone is talking about oh, is Cynthia Nixon going to be a spoiler? And I will wrap up with this. The consequence for voting your conscience shouldn't be the candidate that you like the least getting elected. Do away with the whole spoiler process. You have an unprecedented ability to do that. Lastly, if you talk about a time when New York City Council was really at a golden age in terms of electing minorities, when I say "minorities," I don't just mean ethnic and gender-based minorities, but working minorities, it was the 12 years that New York City had proportional representation from 1933 to 1945.

You saw a body in this city that was much more representative of how the public voted.

So I would encourage you when you have your expert testimony hearings in June, have at least one evening dedicated to proportional representation. Can it be implemented in 2018 in a practical level in compliance with the Voters Rights Act and should it be? Just one evenings of experts on proportional representation, how it worked in New York City and then in the '30s and '40s and how it could work in the 2020s. I think you would see a world of really, really incredible ideas. Thank you.

MS. GODSIL: Thank you.
Any question from the commissioners?
All right. Thank you all so much for your contributions.

MR. SPEAKER: Commissioner Weiser looked like she wanted to ask a question.

MS. GODSIL: I think we all want to ask many questions, but we are listening and talking. Thank you so much.

We would like to invite Angela Connors, Towaki Komatsa, Matthew Shapiro, and Jerry Goldfeder.

MR. SHAPIRO: All right. I will go first. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Good evening. My name is Matt Shapiro and I'm the legal director of the Street Vendor Project at the Urban Justice Center. Street Vendor Project is a membership-based organization with more than 2,000 members that sell food, merchandise and artwork from trucks, carts, and tables across the city. We organize vendors to make their voices heard, provide legal representation, and small business assistance.

I'm here to recommend that the New York City Charter be updated to address a grave injustice to the current system for allocating mobile food vendors permits. Since 1983, the number of citywide mobile food vending permits has been capped at 3,000 by local law. These are held in perpetuity by former vendors who rent them out in underground market to people who are actually vending from food carts and trucks on streets and sidewalks.

The permit holders pay $\$ 200$ to the city every two years, and then charge actual vendor 20 to $\$ 25,000$ on this underground market. The cap on permits enacted more than 30 years ago has allowed the secondary market to expand and thrive with no benefit to the city or the vendors. As a result, only those people with enough capital to afford this inflated price have the right to be food vendors in the city. Other vendors take dangerous risks and sell without permits resulting in arrests and thousand-dollar fines.

Street vending in New York City has always been a means for mostly new immigrants to get a foothold in the small business community. The same vending system that once launch Fairway and other beloved New York City businesses now results in many vendors taking a dangerous risk selling without permits on being paid a low wage to work for someone who has enough capital to rent a permit from the underground market price.

The New York City Charter should be updated to require the city issue new mobile food vending permits at certain intervals to eliminate this underground market and provide opportunities for immigrants and others looking to start a small business. While there have been previous efforts of the City Council to legislatively increase the number of permits, those efforts were diffused by a small powerful group of special interests who
have been historically opposed to street vendors.
On the contrary, we know that average New Yorkers love street vendors. You just have to look at the lines that form in front of the coffee carts in the morning or the vendors selling falafel for lunch. If they have the chance, the majority of the voters would likely support increasing the number of permits available to provide better opportunities for these small businesses struggling to achieve the American dream. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

MS. GODSIL: Thank you.
MR. KOMATSA: Hi, I'm Towaki Komatsa. I'm a U.S. Navy veteran. To begin my testimony, let me use testimony I gave at City Hall on March 28th before Steven Levin, the Chairperson of the General Welfare Committee. It was in regards to Steven Banks, the commissioner of HRA. So I will just play back a clip of the video.
(Holding up a tablet.)
MS. GODSIL: I'm not sure if it we can hear this. I'm sorry, sir.

MR. KOMATSA: I will quickly summarize it. So basically I had a conversation with Steven

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN

Banks on December 14th at the end of the mayor's town hall meeting in Brooklyn. I recorded him on audio. I live in a shelter for military veterans. I got assaulted. I got punched in my left temple only because HRA failed to act. There was an attempted assault. The landlord, they are going to have a fundraiser tomorrow night. They essentially did a bait and switch with the apartment lease agreements with everyone who lives in that building. Taxpayers pay for those leases.

So the question is if HRA is supposed to be providing oversight, they have been in the news in the last three weeks and the daily news for essentially committing fraud with respect to the OCA, the City agency, I had asked Mr. Carrion previously HRA if taxpayers are essentially footing the bill and there's no oversight, people like me get concussions because of that assault. HRA is doing business with a company six years ago. I had a conversation with Steven Banks in Kew Gardens asking him if the taxpayers are paying for the contracts, an ITT company that's the one six years ago for which I still haven't been paid, for which I have active litigation, can you as a commissioner make a responsible decision for procurement?

Stop making the people in this room (inaudible) to have bank accounts of this company. That still hasn't paid me for the past six years and for which I need to provide financial assistance for my family members.

Also when I met Steven Banks on March 1st at the Yale Club, I told him that (inaudible) judicial misconduct against me. If you take a look at the report, there were 2,143 complaints against state judges, only about 60 percent disciplinary. So if there's no -- if there's inadequate oversight of the judges throughout New York State -- Mr. Bank's wife is the supervisor for the Housing Courts -- isn't there a conflict of interest between Mr. Banks and his wife such that he should never have been considered for his current position given the fact if his wife is improperly supervising judges?

Then people get illegally evicted from their homes. And I have a mentally unstable roommate who is now working for the Department of Education. Yeah, prone to essentially assaulting school kids because there's no oversight. MS. GODSIL: Thank you.

MR. GOLDFEDER: Good evening. Thank you for the opportunity to testify, Commissioners. You have a daunting task to look at the entire charter of the State of New York. And I'm sure you are up for it. I wanted to congratulate Cesar for his role, but he's not here, so I do so in absentia.

As an election practitioner and adjunct professor of election law at Fordham Law School and University of Pennsylvania Law School, I studied the Charter, the City Charter of New York and Charter revision quite closely for over 30 years.

I've participated in what we call the Citizens Charter Change in the mid-1980s and led a group to initiate a Citizens Charter Commission pursuant to Section 363 of the New York Municipal Home Rule Law. I testified in various charity revision commissions over the last number of decades and have written and lectured extensively on a variety of proposals for inclusion as charter amendments.

With that in mind, I offered an amendment
that the Commission ought to seriously consider. The accompanying democracy agenda for New York City, fashioned as proposed Section 1057-F of the Charter which I've attached to the testimony that I have handed up. Its provisions include enhanced registration and enrollment opportunities, early voting, instant runoffs, and no excuse absentee ballot.

With one bold and comprehensive stroke, this democracy agenda offers the people of the City of New York an opportunity to create more robust elections by making it easier to vote, to register and to vote. The City of New York, I think the predicate question that you need to face is whether or not the City of New York has the authority to enact such reforms in municipal elections.

You do. It's been articulated by various experts and disinterested parties including the courts a former New York Attorney General and a former New York City Corporation Counsel. Indeed, I testified myself before the previous Commission to this effect in 2010. Over the years we have established in our municipal elections a highly regarded campaign finance

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN
program term limits reduced petition requirements and nonpartisan elections for vacancies.

The proposed democracy agenda will allow the city to take the crucial next step in easing the voting process. Thirty-seven states already have early voting. New York City should join them. Twelve states and the District of Columbia have enacted automatic registration. New York City should at least provide the opportunity to register on the eve of elections. Twenty-six states and Washington, D.C. allow no excuse absentee voting. We should permit that as well.

There are many states that allow primaries. I'm not in favor of open primaries, but New York City voters should not have to wait almost a year to change political party affiliation in order to vote in a primary. An instant runoff voting using 15 cities in the state of Maine would eliminate an extra trip to the polls and save taxpayer dollars. This was used in New York City in our Board of Election -- sorry, School Board elections during the 1980s and 1990s. We should embrace this voting procedure for all municipal elections.

Each of these reforms and all taken together
would prove to be a giant step for democracy in New York City. I urge you to seriously consider them. And after the -- as I said, after the testimony, I actually have written out

Section 1057-F for your consideration with an executive summary so that you can see how the various proposed reforms can come into play if the Charter is amended. I welcome any questions or comments you have about the process, your authority, and your views with regard to these particular proposals.

MS. GODSIL: Any questions?
MR. SIEGAL: Thanks for coming and for doing all this work. Having been friends for a long time, I cannot resist having you on the witness stand. So --

MR. GOLDFEDER: Do I need a lawyer?
MR. SIEGAL: You will do fine. So first off, on instant runoff, I really can't believe you are citing School Board elections as any indication of a positive for democracy. They were universally reviled so much that we eliminated them and I just don't think that's a good example. MR. GOLDFEDER: We didn't eliminate School

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN Board elections because of instant runoff. We eliminated School Board elections because three people voted. Nobody voted and there was corruption among those school boards. It wasn't the process of the election. It was the fact that these particular boards functioned inappropriately.

MR. SIEGAL: Agreed, but they were widely viewed as the most controlled elections there were. But let me get to the point because I think you made a very positive contribution and I want to ask a bigger question which is, we are charged with enhancing democracy. If you look at the trends, they are abysmal in the city, that the plunge in voter anticipation since 1969 is more than half the people who voted 40 years ago don't vote.

We are on the verge of having mayoral
elections to continue with less than a million voters, when we used to have two and a half million voters. Since 1989, a period in which we had public financing, term limits, voter assistance commission, a whole panoply of pro-democracy reforms, voter participation has again dropped almost by half.

So my question is, why are we to think that any of these reforms particularly instant runoff are going to somehow enhance participation, and how do we know the irony that those advocating instant runoff are saying the solution to democracy is fewer elections? Because the one place where there has not been -- where there is not a drop-off in voter participation is in mayoral runoff elections.

MR. GOLDFEDER: Well, I think you raise the broad question about the purpose of electoral reforms. And I think you're right to raise that. I don't know that instant runoff is going to increase voter turnout. That's the purpose. The purpose is to save taxpayer dollars, to make the elections more efficient. Increased registration opportunities allowing people to register up to ten days before a primary or special or a general will get us more people registering.

Will that increase turnout? Perhaps. But at least it will allow people who wake up on the eve of an election to register. Changing -allowing the ability to change political parties or change from a blank to a party member closer to the election might very well increase voter turnout.

As of now, people need to, if $I$ want to vote in this June 26, 2018, primary for Congress, and I change parties, I had to have changed parties 25 days before the last general election. Well, that's absurd. It's been upheld by the Supreme Court of the United States, but that doesn't mean it's wise. It that doesn't mean we should continue just because it's not unconstitutional.

If we give people the opportunity to change parties because people are energized and they want to vote in a political primary, I'm not suggesting that people be allowed to do so on the day of the primary. But $I$ am suggesting that they allow -- they be allowed to do it within 30 days of that primary. That at least prevents the kind of party-raiding that the laws address.

But it gives people an opportunity to be involved in an election that they want to be involved in because of charismatic candidates or because of political issues and so on. So whether or not those kinds of reforms will increase turnout is unknown. I think it will, but at least it gives people more of an opportunity to be involved. And that's the
candid answer. I wouldn't say that one thing leads to the next automatically. That would be -- that just wouldn't be honest.

MS. WEISER: I have a question for
Mr. Goldfeder which is, have you thought mechanically or as you know, party registration deadlines are set by state law, not by city law. Have you thought of the mechanics of how your proposal would function? Are you suggesting there would be sort of a separate party registration roll that's applicable only for municipal elections and would that be a request for registration change also for state elections?

MR. GOLDFEDER: Right. So the mechanics are tricky. The way this would function whether it's early voting or enhanced registration or changing parties, we would need a separate municipal ballot. Think about it this way. A primary for mayor in September, in the same primary election, you might also have a primary for District Attorney or for judicial delegate or for Republican Party district leader or whatnot. You have the authority through Charter revision to make changes affect municipal elections.

But you can't change the election procedures

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN
as they relate to a District Attorney's justice for the Supreme Court, Civil Court or whatnot. So you need two separate pieces of paper. You need two separate ballots. And we have that on occasion already. And if I change my enrollment or if I register later than the state law currently allows me to, I can theoretically I can vote my municipal ballot, but I can't vote my District Attorney ballot.

MS. WEISER: Are you suggesting a separate registration roll as well?

MR. GOLDFEDER: Well, no, you mark down -you don't have a separate registration enrollment. What you have is an indication on the voter enrollment book -- voter registration book. You have an indication of when the registration takes effect, when the registration is done. And therefore, it could take effect for the municipal ballot, but not yet take effect for the District Attorney ballot.

And so that person is now registered and can vote for mayor, but can't vote for District Attorney, but can come back for the next election and then vote. Same is true if there's a change in enrollment. If you change parties close to the primary, you can only vote for municipal election, but you can't vote for District Attorney because the law pertaining to the state election, the nonmunicipal election doesn't allow you. And that would be in the voter book. So the poll workers know to give you one ballot, but not the other.

MS. WEISER: So it's just changing what's listed on the printed voter book to include the enrollment?

MR. GOLDFEDER: That's right.
MR. HO: Just one really quick question about the proposal to change the registration cutoff date for municipal elections to ten days prior to the election. Is it your understanding that New York State Constitution, Article II, Section 5 about the registration for state elections in New York having to be completed ten days before the election would prohibit the City from setting an even shorter cutoff period for the purposes of municipal elections?

MR. GOLDFEDER: No, but I'm not doing that for the very reason you suggested, because it's the New York State Constitution that says ten days before. Everything relating to registration needs to be finalized ten days before. So my suggestion is that we move up the ability to register.

So, so you can't do it later than ten days before, but now the law is 25 days before. So what I'm suggesting is let's make it ten days before. So that's consistent with the Constitution.

MR. HO: Yeah, no, no, I understand that. Are you saying the City couldn't go beyond that? Because one way --

MR. GOLDFEDER: Are you asking me whether we can have same-day registration?

MR. HO: Or something shorter than ten days.
MR. GOLDFEDER: Only if we amend the New York State Constitution. You folks can't do that. That's my view. If you have a different view and you want to impose same-day registration, God bless you. I will vote for it.

MR. HO: Thank you. Thank you all so much.
MS. GODSIL: So our final panel is Teri Hagedorn, Harpreet Toor, Bitsy Bentley, Robert Hollander, and I think we will have the final person in this panel as well, Rebecca Lamorte. All right.

So thank you all so much. You have the honor of being our final panel. So we can hear from -- why don't we just start here and go all the way down.

MS. LAMORTE: Hello, my name is Rebecca Lamorte. I am one of CBA secretaries and I would like to read testimony on behalf of the Chair of Manhattan Community Board 8. The City Charter sets out the role of 59 community boards throughout City of New York. CBA would like to emphasize the importance of community boards to the effective responsive governance of the city.

New York City is an extremely diverse city and not only racially, religiously, ethnically, and geographically. City determinations affect each neighborhoods differently. By virtue of this great urban diversity, we are as a community uniquely able to inform and advise the city of the needs for city services, the impact of city decisions, and the potential effect of these new policies.

Community boards are vital links between the public, both business and residents, and the city administration. We see from the ground level the localized impact of potential city policies. We are able to respond quickly to the public's concerns. We are the liaison between the public and the city agencies and elected officials. Giving our community a voice, we need to have the city maintain and even strengthen its ear.

Each policy and decision potentially has a different impact on each of the 59 diverse geographic areas of the community boards. We are the most effective way to communicate the effect of those policies and decisions on our communities and the public's concerns. Living or working in these areas, we see the disparate effect of various policies on different neighborhoods. Inviting the public to come see us with their views and city-related problems, we are the voice of the public.

As such, we play an essential advisory role to the city agencies that do not have the funds, time, or manpower to assess each policy's impact on each community. Community boards are vital. Without expressing a view at this time towards either City Charter Commission or any of the Charter provisions, we urge that, in the request to examine the City Charter, the important role of community boards be respected and strengthened. Thank you. MS. GODSIL: Thank you. MR. HOLLANDER: Good evening, Commissioners. Thank you for the important work that you are doing and the time that you are putting into it. My name is Rob Hollander. I am a professor of linguistics at City University at Hunter College and John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Tonight I am here as the secretary of the Chinatown Working Group which is a community planning process group based in Chinatown.

My testimony concerns the obstacles that the City places on a community planning process. These plans reflect broad community consensus. The Chinatown Working Group includes 63 community organizations in this Chinatown in the Lower East Side. The city processing costs of implementing these plans set impossible hurdles for low-income communities, while the Sutton Place community with its deep pockets was able to promote its own rezoning. The Chinatown Working Group does not have the resources for that kind of a process. Specifically for the process, the environmental impact statements, this is I think a fundamental injustice because it allows communities of wealth to have self-determination and it prevents self-determination for communities of low-income. And is sort of aggravates the problem that, you know, community of wealth has in the marketplace greater options in the first place for self-determination and here the government is actually following that grain and tilting the playing field even further rather than trying to level the field.

So we would like to see the costs of the environmental impact statement removed from that process. I think there are a number of different ways that the Charter could do that. It would be possible for an independent assessment made of a community planning process where a report could be issued on whether the planning process is actually viable and of the consequences would be that would be a very inexpensive way to show that this process is a useful process.

Currently, the only waiver for the process is highly politicized because it can only be done through the borough president. The borough president appoints all the community board members and this, and the community board members are not elected. So this is a kind of incestuous
political process for the community board themselves include other neighborhoods than a specific neighborhood that might be rezoned. So the entire thing is much more politically complex.

But you could also ask that a certain percentage of local residents of the rezoning area are signed off on some kind of petition and that would be part of the way to move forward a community-based planning process. Chinatown Working Group as I said is, you know, 60-plus organizations, local organizations. We worked for seven years to come up with a planning process, and we cannot move it forward because we simply don't have the money.

MS. GODSIL: Thank you so much.
MS. BENTLEY: Hi, I'm Bitsy Bentley and this is my very first time attending one of these things. And it's been totally fascinating and I've learned so much. And it's been super-cool to, like, hear everybody's thoughts about things. And the reason why I wanted to come tonight is because I have this fantasy that, like, 150 years from now, everybody when they graduate from high school, they do a couple of years of civil

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN service and they use that for college and a big part of what they do in that process is to actually implement participatory democracy processes.

And so when I found out about Lander's proposal for the Office of Civic Engagement, I was like oh, my goodness, this is, like, the coolest thing. This is perfectly exactly putting us on the path to my dream 150 years from now. And so I just wanted to be here to voice my support for that.

And then two things that for me were really interesting and compelling about that proposal were the expansion of participatory budgeting as well as the year in service. And the year in service in particular I think is really, really important because one of the things that I see an awful lot is that it takes a lot of privilege to be able to sit here at this microphone and be here on a Wednesday night and actually have the time.

It takes a lot of privilege for me to actually be able to, like, read the entire Charter because I've got enough time to do it. I have the education and the resources and the

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN
support to do those things and there are so many people in our communities with so much less than I have that aren't able to be here. And for me, things like a year in service, things like the Office of Civic Engagement, those are the things that provide the path for people to be able to have that kind of engagement.

There's so much dissatisfaction right now with our government. There's so much dissatisfaction with the way that our communities are being managed. And I think for a lot of people it's because there's just a lack of exposure and a lack of experience.

When I talk to people who work in city government, when I talk to people who are civil servants, these are amazing folks that are trying to make the world a better place. And that's a really wonderful and beautiful thing. But there's so little exposure that we have as average everyday citizens. A few years ago, I have been living in New York for 12 years. And a few years ago, I had this realization that, like, when I was agreeing up in a small town in Minnesota, my mom taught the kids in the community that $I$ grew up in and my dad went to

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN the power plant, the electricity for the community that I grew up in.

And I live in New York City and at the time I was a market research executive and I could have done my job anywhere. I didn't have any kind of relationship with my city. I didn't have any kind of relationship with my community. So I'm really excited at the idea of something like an Office of Civic Engagement because it provides the opportunity for people like me to be able to engage in the community. But even more importantly than that, it gives an opportunity for people with less resources than I have to actually be a part of city government.

MR. TOOR: Thank you. My name is Harpreet Toor. You have a problem pronouncing it; it's not the first time. Everybody does. Thank you, Commissioners, for giving me this opportunity. Basically, you know, I have been listening. I came with something else to say, but after listening to people here, there are a few things which from my personal experience I am going to share which I am definitely you need to look at when you sit down and look at those revisions for the Charter.

The 2020 Census, even though the consulate said that redistricting will take place in 2020, it will be in 2022. Last time the Census took place, redistricting when we walked down, literally we were told that the area which we were planning to have together it was divided into six sections.

The councilman who was literally walking on the street while he has (inaudible) he got elected finally he is behind the bars right now. So those kind of people who run, there should be some sort of checks. We are talking what I've seen happen in India. This is definitely a better place, but these things are happening. Seeing what happened in India, criminal and you run over here, a criminal over here. And he won. Those, the way the Census is conducted and how those numbers are used in redistricting, that is one I would definitely like you to look at.

Number two is linguistic participation. Reading about it, but I found out there's a hearing going on and this whole thing for me, it was, like, in the last 24, 36 hours I will go and do it. Linguistically, we can talk a million plans here. If linguistically those people we

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN are working for whom we are trying to make the life easy, if they cannot understand what the city is trying to do, how they will participate and tell you or me or anybody what they are looking for.

That's number three, and I know the time is really constrained and I'm -- I will try to say it in three and a half minutes. And the other thing is that the way the redistricting come from the federal and the state, I literally have seen because in 2010 Census. I worked in southeast Queens. The whole southeast Queens, I have seen literally walking street after street which was not in even paved, not taken care of because funds do not get directed.

Based on those communities, they do not participate. The reason they do not participation is because they did not know about it, but they do not understand those things. MS. GODSIL: Thank you very much. I think we are going to switch the microphone.

MS. HAGEDORN: Hi. Thank you for the chance to testify. I know everybody's tired and hungry, so I will make this very fast. My name is Teri Hagedorn and I am a volunteer member of the

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN

New York chapter of Represent Us which is a national anticorruption organization. And our mission is to pass tough anticorruption laws in cities and states across America and to end the legalized corruption that has come to define modern politics the it's a big task. A big component of our efforts is campaign finance reform. Obviously it's a priority for the mayor and for you as well.

And as we have been talking about tonight, even though New York has one of the best public match systems in America with up to 55 percent of the campaign spending provided by the public funds, we are still seeing a lot more wealthy donors than we really should. And Represent Us New York did a study with Reinvent Albany and found in 2017, 68 percent of council members' campaign funds came from donations over \$500, and 54 percent came from donations over $\$ 1,000$. So it's obviously a lot of money, and especially when you consider that 60 percent of New Yorkers haven't saved even three months' savings.

So one of the solutions to the problem is to increase the amount of available public spending. And it's something that Mayor de Blasio mentioned in his State of the State address when he said our goal is for elections to be funded primarily by public dollars, thereby greatly reducing the power of big money. So there's an existing bill. And we actually have the man up here tonight. I did not know we would. Ben Kallos, his bill, the introduction of 732 which would raise the public financing cap up to 85 percent.

Personally I like the voucher program, in Seattle as well. But I feel like this bill is it's a manageable, incremental step. And I feel like if New Yorkers have a chance to have matching funds in their elections they would vote yes, and that it would help to bring in new candidates, more civic engagement and build greater faith in our elected officials.

And there's actually a study released in June 2017 talking about the benefits and campaign finance reform which included greater racial and class diversity among donors, more women running for office, and increased number of donors and more quality time with constituents. I have in my testimony some of the other descriptions of these types of campaign finance programs. And just on a personal notes because $I$ have

40 seconds, I'm from a small town in
North Carolina where, you know, a state like has to be dragged into the next century. And I moved to New York because of its progressive politics and I'm excited to see what this council, this Commission can bring forward. Thank you.

MS. GODSIL: Thank you all.
Any questions from the commissioners?
Thank you all so much. And thanks to everyone for staying here tonight. It's been an amazingly informative and value opportunity for us to hear from people. And please come up to further meetings we will be having going forward. And again, thanks everyone. Good evening.

Is there a motion to adjourn?
MR. BRAGG: So moved.
MS. GODSIL: And a vote? All in favor? (A chorus of ayes.)

MS. GODSIL: Any opposed?
The meeting is adjourned.
(Whereupon, at 8:56 p.m., the above matter was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

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

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

That the above is a correct transcription of my stenographic notes.

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

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 10th day of May 2018.


JOSHUA EDWARDS

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| \$168,000 [1] - 34:2 |  | 384,880 [1] - 47:4 |  |
| \$175[3] - 35:24, 50:12, 50:16 | $\begin{aligned} & 20[2]-18: 10,99: 23 \\ & 20,000[2]-93: 15,93: 23 \end{aligned}$ | 39 [1] - 77:5 | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 67:20, 70:19, 75:12, 76:1, } \\ & \text { 79:1, 87:1, 89:18, 94:1, } \end{aligned}$ |
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| \$200 [1] - 99:22 | 2000 [1] - 16:19 |  | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 115:18, 116:1, 117:20, } \\ & 120: 19,120: 23,121: 3, \end{aligned}$ |
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| \$250 [1] - 96:24 | 2001[1]-84:1 |  | $\begin{gathered} \text { 121:6, 122:10 } \\ \text { abolish [1] - } 97: 9 \end{gathered}$ |
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| \$5,000 [2] - 36:5, 50:8 | $\begin{aligned} & 2004[1]-94: 14 \\ & 2009[2]-13: 11,71: 16 \\ & 2010[3]-49: 20,105: 23, \\ & 124: 11 \end{aligned}$ |  | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 5:23, 7:25, 9:14, 10:14, } \\ & \text { 13:12, 15:18, 21:17, 23:17, } \\ & \text { 23:19, 23:21, 23:23, 24:8, } \\ & \text { 24:12, 26:9, 33:20, 34:2, } \end{aligned}$ |
| \$500 [1] - 125:18 |  | $\begin{aligned} & 436[1]-93: 20 \\ & 476[1]-1: 4 \end{aligned}$ |  |
|  | 2011[1] - 84:2 | 48[1] - 59:15 |  |
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|  |  | 50A [1] - 23:7 | $\begin{aligned} & 76: 9,83: 17,85: 20,86: 1, \\ & \text { 87:7, 88:3, 88:4, 89:19, } \end{aligned}$ |
| $100[2]-36: 2,76: 10$ | $\begin{aligned} & 2017 \text { [9] - 11:4, 33:9, 35:16, } \\ & \text { 37:18, 66:4, 71:18, 93:19, } \\ & \text { 125:17, 126:18 } \end{aligned}$ | 54 [1] - 125:19 |  |
| 100,000 [1] - 75:9 |  | $55[3]-28: 19,50: 3,125: 12$ | 95:20, 97:5, 97:13, 97:19, |
| $10018[1]-1: 4$ 1057-F[2] - 105:3, | $\begin{gathered} 2018[7]-1: 1,1: 6,2: 2,2: 4, \\ 98: 6,110: 3,128: 15 \end{gathered}$ | 5th [1] - 1:4 | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 111:18, 113:13, 113:17, } \\ & \text { 119:21, 120:5, 120:13, } \\ & \text { 123:21, 124:18, 125:10, } \\ & 126: 18 \end{aligned}$ |
| 10th [1] - 128:15 |  |  |  |
| $\begin{aligned} & 11[4]-79: 13,81: 3,88: 7, \\ & 89: 24 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 2020[3]-39: 11,123: 1,123: 2 \\ & 2020 s[1]-98: 11 \end{aligned}$ | 6 |  |
| 11-year-olds [1] - 89:6 | $\begin{aligned} & 2021[4]-30: 10,31: 7,31: 19 \\ & 2022[1]-123: 3 \end{aligned}$ | $60[3]-62: 12,103: 12,125: 21$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { above }[3]-85: 17,127: 21, \\ & 128: 8 \end{aligned}$ |
| 12 [3]-14:4, 97:24, 121:21 | 2029 [1] - 30:11 <br> 21-member [2] - 21:21, 21:22 | 60-plus [1] - 119:1 <br> 63 [1]-117.15 |  |
| 12-year-old's [1] - 82:20 |  | 63 [1]-117:15 | absentee [2] - 105:8, 106:12 <br> absentia [1] - 104:9 |
| 1225[1]-32:20 | 21st [2] - 14:11, 15:13 | 68 [1] - 125:17 |  |
| 125,000 [1] - 91:2 | $24 \text { [2] - 92:13, 123:23 }$ | 6:13 [1] - 1:6 | absolutely [5] - 11:11, 52:8, |
| 14 [1] - 94:15 |  |  | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 95:25, 96:13, 97:9 } \\ & \text { absurd }[1]-110: 6 \end{aligned}$ |
| 14th [1] - 102:1 15[2] - 77:14, 106:18 | $25[5]-10: 4,46: 20,46: 24$, $110: 5,114: 5$ | 7 |  |
| 150 [2]-119:23, 120:9 | 26 [1] - 110:3 | 7 [1] - 34:13 | abuse [2] - 10:16, 91:13 <br> abuses [1] - 90:25 |
| 16 [1] - 46:22 | 28th [1] - 101:16 | $70,000[2]-72: 24,73:$ | abysmal [1] - 108:14 <br> access [7]-3:14, 14:16, |
| 16,000 [1]-34:9 | $29[2]-15: 21,80:$ | $73[1]-11: 4$ |  |
| 163,000 [1]-62:7 | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 29-year [1] - 15:20 } \\ & \text { 294,000 [1] - 93:17 } \end{aligned}$ | 732 [1]-126:7 | access [7] - 3:14, 14:16, <br> $29 \cdot 10,52 \cdot 20,88 \cdot 23,94 \cdot 1$ |
| 168 [1] - 34:10 17 [2] - $22 \cdot 8 \cdot 24 \cdot 12$ |  |  | 94:18 |
| 17 [2]-22:8, 24:12 |  | 8 | accessible [2] - 4:12, 14:19 |
| 18[1] - 16:22 | 3 | 8 [1] - 115:8 | accommodate [1] - 18:6 |
| 18,000 [1] - 34:8 | 3 [1] - 32:23 | 80 [2] - 44:6, 91:6 | accompanying [1] - 105:2 |
| 182 [1] - 34:10 | 3,000[1]-99:17 | $85[4]-28: 19,35: 25,50: 3$,$126: 8$ | according [1] - 73:17 <br> account [1] - 60:7 |
| 190 [1] - 81:2 | $3,300[1]-80: 24$3,850 [1] - 31:9 |  |  |
| 1933 [1] - 97:25 |  | 85,000 [2] - 62:9, 72:23 | accountability $[7]-10: 12$,11:10, $22: 14,12: 18,12: 22$, |
| 1945 [1] - 97:25 | $\begin{aligned} & 30[7]-46: 20,46: 23,46: 25, \\ & 92: 19,99: 25,104: 15, \\ & 110: 16 \end{aligned}$ | 8:56[1] - 127:21 |  |
| 1969 [1] - 108:15 |  |  | 18:25, 22:20 |
| 1980s [1] - 106:22 |  | 9 | accountable [11] - 10:18, |
| 1983 [1] - 99:15 | $300[1]-36: 14$ | 9[2]-1:6, 2:4 | $\begin{aligned} & 10: 23,10: 25,11: 16,12: 1, \\ & 12: 24,57: 17,59: 19,63: 3, \end{aligned}$ |
| 1988[2] - 27:19, 46:2 | 300,000 [2] - 32:6, 42:3 |  |  |
| 1989 [1]-108:21 | 31 [1] - 90:7 | $9,540[1]-33: 7$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 69:7, 69:13 } \\ & \text { accountants [1] - 96:4 } \end{aligned}$ |
| 1990s [2]-69:23, 106:22 | 31,000 [1] - 36:12 | $98[1]-30: 11$ |  |

accounts [1] - 103:4
achieve [2]-19:14, 101:10
ACLU's [1] - 4:10
across [12]-20:23, 26:16,
29:4, 57:7, 57:14, 83:25, 86:6, 87:1, 87:2, 99:8, 125:4
Act $[1]$ - 98:8
act $[5]-60: 24,71: 8,73: 17$,
78:5, 102:5
action [4]-18:22, 68:10,
68:11, 128:11
actions [3]-61:1, 69:2,
89:21
active $[9]-14: 12,45: 25$, 64:11, 66:21, 67:5, 67:17, 79:2, 84:4, 102:25
activism [1] - 80:9
activist ${ }_{[2]}$ - 45:24, 66:9 activists [1]-85:20 activities [3] - 41:20, 43:18, 71:3
activity [2] - 33:23, 70:20
actual [1] - 99:23
actually [31] - 15:6, 16:4,
21:19, 21:23, 22:25, 29:6, 43:3, 49:9, 49:23, 50:10, 50:15, 51:10, 54:15, 60:15, 64:10, 65:19, 72:5, 85:18, 86:4, 89:19, 93:21, 99:19, 107:4, 118:7, 118:17, 120:3, 120:20, 120:23, 122:14, 126:5, 126:17
acute [2]-22:23, 65:5
ad [1] - 65:22
add [1] - 22:14
added [1] - 89:3
adding [1] - 65:23
addition [2] - 12:4, 64:22
additional $[6]-7: 17,22: 14$,
27:8, 70:7, 73:25, 89:25
additionally $[4]-13: 23,94: 4$,
96:14, 97:4
address [10]-2:17, 21:7, 26:11, 27:1, 45:22, 59:2,
76:2, 99:13, 110:17, 126:1
addressing [2] - 12:18, 81:9
adequate [1]-25:5
adjourn [1]-127:15
adjourned [1] - 127:20
adjunct [1] - 104:10
administered [1] - 43:10
administration [3] - 38:25,
48:22, 115:24
Administrative [1] - 11:6
administrative [1] - 49:2
adopt [3] - 13:21, 57:3, 57:12
adopted ${ }_{[2]}-57: 2,57: 5$
advance [4]-6:4, 18:24, 19:3, 21:4
advise [1] - 115:18
advisor [1] - 48:8
Advisory [3] - 49:21, 52:25, 53:8
advisory [1] - 116:17
advocacy [3]-34:21, 42:13, 83:17
advocate [1] - 39:18
advocates [3] - 42:17, 81:21, 85:9
advocating [1] - 109:4
affect [3]-85:7, 111:24, 115:15
affiliation [1] - 106:16
affirmed [1] - 77:7
afford [1] - 100:4
affordability [1] - 19:18
affordable [1] - 19:19
afforded [1] - 8:13
African [3] - 46:21, 46:22, 47:14
African-American [3] 46:21, 46:22, 47:14
after [11]-2:4, 9:18, 11:23,
30:10, 37:5, 46:13, 55:14, 107:3, 122:20, 124:13
afterwards [1] - 38:16
again [17]-4:19, 6:2, 7:9, 7:13, 7:20, 7:24, 8:11, 8:19, 8:24, 9:11, 9:16, 33:10, 40:1, 83:13, 84:8, 108:25, 127:14
against [10] - 18:23, 37:7, 37:12, 37:14, 42:17, 45:14, 52:18, 63:4, 103:10, 103:12
age [7] - 78:17, 79:13, 81:2, 86:6, 88:7, 89:4, 97:20
agencies [11] - 14:21, 20:23, 22:13, 26:17, 77:24, 78:15, 82:7, 82:10, 88:16, 116:3, 116:18
agency [6] - 15:4, 15:24,
80:3, 94:7, 94:9, 102:16
agenda [4] - 92:13, 105:2, 105:10, 106:3
aggravates [1] - 118:4
aggregate [1] - 25:12
agile [1] - 13:21
ago [8] - 75:4, 86:25, 99:25, 102:21, 102:24, 108:16, 121:20, 121:22
agreed [1] - 108:8
agreeing [1] - 121:23
agreements [1] - 102:9
ahead [1] - 65:17
airports [1] - 62:11
Akchin [1] - 90:16
Albany [4] - 48:8, 59:14, 68:19, 125:16

Alex [3] - 40:6, 48:7, 54:19
Alexis [2] - 9:19, 18:3
Alison [3]-56:2, 61:25, 62:5
all [79]-2:5, 3:1, 3:14, 4:8, $4: 19,5: 5,5: 23,6: 5,7: 4$, 11:16, 14:9, 14:15, 14:18, 14:19, 18:6, 19:13, 19:23, 23:10, 27:9, 30:21, 31:20, 34:19, 36:7, 36:12, 36:13, 37:19, 41:21, 41:23, 44:9, 44:17, 45:13, 49:14, 52:9, 53:10, 53:23, 55:25, 56:4, 58:8, 58:24, 61:2, 61:18, 62:14, 62:23, 63:23, 64:13, 69:4, 69:8, 69:16, 70:1,
71:4, 71:14, 71:21, 72:24,
74:1, 81:24, 83:1, 85:2,
86:6, 86:13, 90:12, 93:14,
95:4, 97:1, 98:16, 98:20,
99:1, 106:23, 106:25,
107:14, 114:20, 114:25,
115:1, 115:3, 118:23,
127:7, 127:9, 127:17
allocate [1] - 76:9
allocated [2]-75:18, 84:22
allocating [1] - 99:14
allow [11] - 29:11, 65:1, 65:9,
65:11, 93:6, 106:3, 106:11,
106:13, 109:21, 110:15,
113:4
allowed [9] - 39:13, 40:21,
40:23, 41:10, 60:6, 92:12, 100:1, 110:13, 110:15
allowing [6] - 47:16, 56:5, 65:8, 83:10, 109:17, 109:23
allows [3] - 8:4, 112:7, 117:25
alluded [1] - 96:18
almost [5] - 10:20, 56:25,
84:7, 106:15, 108:25
along [3] - 50:9, 62:14, 76:21
already [12] - 2:8, 42:21,
45:2, 45:7, 49:24, 70:2, 77:8, 77:13, 79:1, 91:22, 106:5, 112:5
also [40]-2:21, 14:20, 16:23,
19:19, 20:9, 21:6, 21:15,
29:14, 30:6, 32:9, 32:22,
43:18, 46:2, 48:24, 49:18,
53:25, 58:17, 63:10, 66:2, 76:25, 77:18, 78:8, 79:6,
79:13, 79:21, 82:20, 83:20,
83:24, 87:4, 90:10, 91:16,
91:19, 94:10, 94:19, 94:20,
94:23, 103:8, 111:13,
111:20, 119:6
alternative [1]-29:12
alternatives [1] - 64:1
although [1] - 49:19

Alvaader [4] - 40:5, 45:18, 45:19, 45:23
always [3]-27:17, 40:18, 100:8
am [35] - 2:20, 3:3, 3:7,
21:15, 28:12, 31:7, 31:16,
36:17, 37:10, 38:12, 40:15,
40:17, 40:20, 40:21, 56:5,
66:7, 66:9, 67:5, 73:12,
76:25, 83:16, 83:20, 84:3,
87:6, 95:14, 110:14, 115:6,
117:6, 117:9, 122:22,
122:23, 124:25, 128:10,
128:12
amazing [2] - 84:19, 121:16
amazingly [1] - 127:11
amend [2] - 5:9, 114:15
amended [1] - 107:8
amendment [7] - 10:8,
11:18, 11:20, 12:6, 12:12, 64:20, 104:25
Amendment [2] - 43:13, 52:20
amendments [1] - 104:24
America [3] - 64:24, 125:4, 125:12
American [7] - 40:17, 41:3,
46:21, 46:22, 47:14, 47:17, 101:11
among [3]-50:14, 108:4, 126:20
amount [5] - 11:2, 33:9, 34:2, 85:14, 125:24
amounts [2] - 36:23, 95:7
analogous [1]-20:24
analyses [1] - 55:12
analysis [1] - 25:11
anecdote [2] - 30:15, 30:21
Angela [1] - 98:23
Angeles [2] - 29:17, 38:4
ANGELO [7] - 1:15, 3:6,
37:1, 37:3, 39:6, 67:20,
90:2
Angelo [2]-3:5, 3:7
Annetta [1] - 3:25
ANNETTA [1] - 1:18
another [6]-12:25, 15:24,
29:5, 29:8, 63:15, 85:25
answer [6] - 17:4, 17:10,
25:15, 58:24, 67:21, 111:1
answered [2]-87:9, 88:24
answering [1] - 87:6
answers [2] - 16:25, 17:11
anticipation [1] - 108:15
anticorruption [2] - 125:2, 125:3
Antonio [1] - 37:13
any [53]-5:12, 7:25, 8:17,
8:25, 21:12, 22:7, 22:12,
23:20, 24:1, 24:5, 25:10,

| 27:8, 30:15, 30:22, 33:12, | $46: 19,46: 20,46: 23,46: 24$ | 16:8, 18:18, 19:5, 20:18, | at [84]-2:4, 2:8, 2:9, 2:15, |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 33:14, 33:15, 35:24, 47:7, | 47:2, 47:4, 47:6, 49:9 | 24:7, 24:21, 25:9, 28:3 | 6, 2:21, 3:7, 3:18, 4:6, |
| 50:16, 52:1, 52:21, 54:18, | 50:15, 52:2, 52:9, 52:12 | 29:12, 31:5, 33:1, 33:25 | 4:7, 4:17, 5:12, 5:17, 5:23, |
| 55:24, 56:11, 56:18, 66:21, | 52:17, 53:23, 54:14, 55:13, | 37:8, 37:19, 38:11, 40:13, | 6:23, 8:2, 8:14, 9:10, |
| 67:19, 68:25, 70:7, 71:5, | 55:18, 56:17, 58:25, 59:4, | 40:19, 41:15, 41:18, 42:18, | 15:24, 22:1, 23:10, 23:25 |
| 71:11, 71:13, 73:20, 73:25 | 60:5, 60:13, 61:15, 61:16 | $44: 24,46: 5,46: 25,49: 13$ | $25: 3,28: 11,28: 23,30: 12$ |
| 86:11, 89:25, 91:5, 91:13, | 62:13, 63:2, 64:6, 64:24, | 50:25, 54:12, 54:13, 56:9, | $34: 4,39: 3,42: 1,42: 21$ |
| 92:13, 96:25, 98:15, 107:8, | $65: 4,65: 25,67: 21,67: 23,$ | 58:2, 58:21, 62:4, 63:10, | $43: 8,49: 4,49: 21,54: 8,$ |
| 116:22. 122:5. 122:7. | 68:3, 68:5, 68:8, 68:19 | 63:18, 64:1, 64:8, 64:13 | 55:1, 61:19, 65:1, 67:22, |
| 127:8, 127:19, 128:10 | 72:15, 72:17, 72:20, 72:25, | $70: 5,73: 6,74: 11,75: 1$ | 73:4, 73:7, 74:21, 75:17, |
| anybody [2] - 95:5, $124:$ | 73:13, 75:16, 76:7, 77:8 | 77:20, 78:13, 79:13, $80:$ | 79:13, 83:20, 84:25, 88:7 |
| anyone [6]-7:22, 23:17, | 77:9, 78:12, 78:13, 78:14, | 80:9, 80:20, 81:2, 82:7, | 89:5, 89:7, 89:10, 92:7, |
| 23:20, 30:16, 74:4, 88:6 | 78:16, 78:20, 78:22, 78:23, | 82:11, 83:5, 83:19, 83:21 | 92:13, 97:20, 98:4, 99:4 |
| anything [6]-15:5, 30:16, | 78:25, 82:22, 83:2, 84:2, | 84:10, 84:18, 85:15, 86:15, | 99:17, 100:19, 101:4, |
| 36:1, 53:15, 76:18, 84:16 | 87:15, 88:1, 88:17, 89:17 | 88:24, 89:8, 89:15, 90:23, | 101:16, 102:1, 103:8, |
| anyway [1] - 71:21 | 89:18, 89:20, 89:21, 89:22, | 90:24, 92:4, 93:11, 93:14 | 103:11, 104:5, 104:11, |
| anywhere [1] - 122:5 | 90:3, 90:6, 91:7, 92:10, | 94:6, 94:23, 96:14, 100:2, | 106:9, 108:13, 109:21, |
| apart [1] - 71:11 | 92:11, 92:22, 93:4, 93:17 | 103:1, 104:10, 104:23, | 110:16, 110:24, 116:21, |
| apartment [1] - 102:9 | 93:25, 94:12, 94:19, 95:11, | 105:3, 106:12, 107:3, | 117:7, 120:19, 122:3, |
| apologize [1] - 40:8 | $\begin{aligned} & 95: 21,96: 8,96: 10,98: 21, \\ & 99: 17,102: 7,102: 17 \end{aligned}$ | 107:20, 108:9, 110:2, | 122:8, 122:23, 122:24, |
| appearance [1] - 32:16 | $102: 23,104: 7,10$ | 114:24, 115:17, 116:1 |  |
| appleton [1] - 74:7 | 108:12, 108:14 |  |  |
| Appleton [2] - 74:2, 74:10 | 108:18, 109:1, 109:3, | 120:15, 121:19, 125:9, | attempted |
| APPLETON [1] - 74:8 <br> applicable [1] - 111:11 | 109:5, 110:11, 111:7, | $125: 10,126: 10$ | attendance ${ }_{[2]}$ - 92:5, 92:10 |
| applies [1] - 51:8 | 111:9, 111:14, 112:10, | Asian [2] - 47:1, 47:2 $\text { ask }[16]-8: 6,9: 12,2$ | attending [1] - 119:18 |
| apply [1] - 75:6 | $115: 22,116: 1,116: 2$ | $21: 17,22: 16,32: 6,33: 3$ | $60: 11,74: 9$ |
| appoint [1]-4:22 appointed [4]-5:14 | 116:8, 116:16, 116:20, | 60:11, 61:18, 61:19, 65:16, | attest [1] - 64:9 |
| 23:23, 61:18 | 7:4, 117:5, 118:12 | $\begin{aligned} & 73: 16,98: 19,98: 20, \\ & 108 \cdot 17 \quad 110 \cdot 6 \end{aligned}$ | Attorney [7] - 69:3, 105:20, |
| appointees [1] - 92:11 | 121:5, 121:11, 121:16 | asked [4] - 9:6, 22:6, 25:2 | 111:21, 112:9, 112:20, |
| appoints [1] - 118:23 | 122:21, 123:12, 123:14 | 102:16 | 112:23, 113:3 <br> Attorney's [1] - 112: |
| $58: 18,89: 1$ | 123:18, 124:1, 124:4 | asking [4] - 33:6, 41:9, | AUDIENCE [1] - 11:14 |
| appreciated [1] - 95:11 |  | 102:22, 114:1 | audio [1] - 102:3 |
| appreciation [1] - 82:10 | 119:8, 123:5 | assault [2] - 102:6 | authority [3] - 105:16, |
| approval [1] - 82:8 | areas [8] - 9:9, 14:7, 22:21, | assaulted [1] - 102:4 | 107:10, 111:23 <br> automatic [1] - 106:8 |
| archaic [1] - 29:13 | 24:25, 57:12, 88:22, 116:8, | assaulting [1] - 103:25 | automatically [3] - 29:12 |
| $26: 8,27: 7$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 116:12 } \\ & \text { aren't [2] - 36:3, 121:3 } \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { assembly }[4]-37: 8,37: 12, \\ & 37: 16,37: 19 \end{aligned}$ | $92: 6,111: 2$ <br> available [8]-7:6, 7:9, |
| Archer [1] - 4:17 <br> are [208] - 2:2, 2: | argue [2] - 39:14, 52:15 | Assembly [2] - 37:14, 38:2 | $15: 8,30: 12,78: 25,101: 9$ |
| 7:2, 7:16, 7:25, 8:8, 8:17, |  | assert [2] - 43:12, 43:17 | $125: 24$ |
| 10:3, 10:5, 10:7, 10:11, | $56: 21,58: 2,58: 3,69: 15$ | asserting [1] - 42:17 assertion [1] - 41:15 | Avenue [1]-1:4 <br> average [2] - 101:2, 121:20 |
| $12: 13,12: 24,13: 9,14$ | 69:16 | assess [1] - 116:19 | avoid [1] - 92:20 |
| $14: 15,14: 23,15: 12,15: 15$, | arguments [1] - 51:24 <br> around [8]-14:2, 14:22, | $\begin{aligned} & \text { assessment }[2]-65: 14 \text {, } \\ & 118: 14 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { aware }[4]-22: 7,22: 12,52: 3, \\ & 56: 9 \end{aligned}$ |
| $20: 7,22: 5,22: 7,22: 8$ | 15:7, 20:25, 57:23, 68:16, | assign [1] - 8:9 | away [3] - 28:7, 72:6, 97:17 |
| 22:12, 23:5, 23:22, 24:13, |  | assignment [1] - 24:2 | awful [2] - 34:13, 120:18 |
| 25:10, 26:5, 26:20, 27:3, | $\text { arrive [1] - } 8: 14$ | Assistance [1] - 52:24 <br> assistance [4] - 53:24 | Ayala [1] - 37:12 |
| $\begin{aligned} & 29: 17,30: 4,30: 8,31: 24 \\ & 31: 25,32: 1,32: 12,32: 25 \end{aligned}$ | Article [1] - 113:16 | $\begin{array}{r} \text { assistance [4] - 53:24, } \\ 99: 11,103: 7,108: 23 \end{array}$ | ayes [1] - 127:18 |
| $33: 1,33: 19,34: 15,35: 14$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { articulated }[1]-105: 18 \\ & \text { artwork [1] - } 99: 8 \end{aligned}$ | associated [1] - 71:5 <br> association [2] - 35:10, 68:4 | B |
| $\begin{aligned} & 39: 24,40: 22,40: 24,41: 11, \\ & 41: 16,42: 2,42: 23,43: 9 \\ & 43: 11,44: 3,44: 15,44: 16 \\ & 44: 20,45: 4,46: 7,46: 10 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { as [128] - } 2: 15,2: 19,2: 24, \\ 4: 20,5: 15,6: 20,6: 25,7: 2, \\ 7: 5,7: 6,7: 17,7: 24,8: 1, \\ 9: 5,10: 2,10: 11,11: 1, \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { associations [2] - 41:15, } \\ & \text { 41:18 } \end{aligned}$ <br> Associations [1] - 35:9 <br> asymmetrical [1] - 22:19 | $\begin{aligned} & \text { back }[12]-28: 7,35: 22,36: 2 \\ & 37: 23,39: 2,39: 20,42: 17 \\ & 51: 15,60: 23,63: 4,101: 20 \\ & 112: 23 \end{aligned}$ |

backgrounds [1] - 79:20
bad [1] - 39:5
bait [1]-102:8
ballot [22] - 16:1, 29:10, 29:12, 32:11, 40:2, 47:22, 51:14, 61:6, 65:14, 65:20, 70:1, 77:20, 78:5, 82:13, 82:18, 105:8, 111:18, 112:8, 112:9, 112:19, 112:20, 113:6
ballots [5]-47:7, 77:15, 81:19, 85:2, 112:4
bank [2] - 19:21, 103:4
bank's [1] - 103:15
banking [2] - 64:15, 66:12
Banking [2]-20:1, 20:10
Banks [4] - 101:19, 102:1,
102:22, 103:8
banks [3]-20:2, 20:4, 103:17
Bar [1] - 35:9
bar [1] - 35:10
Barcelona [1]-26:22
bargaining [1] - 68:11
barred [2] - 44:4, 47:7
barriers [2]-52:8, 65:4
bars [1] - 123:10
base [2] - 65:24
baseball [2] - 36:6, 36:7
based [13]-2:18, 14:3, 18:4, 18:7, 38:12, 57:6, 77:5, 86:23, 97:23, 99:6, 117:11, 119:10, 124:16
basic [1]-69:16
basically [4]-57:13, 67:1, 101:25, 122:19
bathroom [1] - 81:22
be [135] - 3:3, 5:10, 5:19, 5:20, 6:1, 6:21, 7:19, 7:20, 8:5, 8:12, 8:13, 9:5, 9:10, 12:21, 13:22, 14:9, 14:18, 15:22, 16:4, 16:5, 16:7, 17:15, 21:25, 23:13, 25:15, 26:12, 30:9, 30:12, 31:2, 31:3, 32:11, 32:19, 33:15, 36:14, 39:12, 39:17, 39:18, 41:2, 41:3, 41:8, 41:9, 41:16, 41:21, 42:23, 43:20, 44:18, 47:17, 47:18, 47:20, 49:5, 49:16, 50:20, 51:2, 52:21, 53:3, 54:12, 55:19, 55:22, 57:24, 58:9, 62:22, 62:25, 63:25, 65:2, 67:20, 71:6, 71:23, 72:7, 72:10, 73:19, 75:7, 75:12, 75:17, 75:23, 76:17, 78:10, 79:1, 79:17, 81:14, 85:9, 86:16, 86:21, 87:3, 87:25, 88:11, 91:20, 92:6, 92:12, 93:7, 93:25, 95:2, 97:13, 97:15,

98:6, 98:8, 99:13, 100:4, 100:17, 102:12, 107:1, 110:13, 110:15, 110:18, 110:19, 110:25, 111:3, 111:10, 111:12, 113:5, 113:18, 114:1, 116:25, 118:13, 118:16, 118:17, 118:18, 118:21, 119:3, 119:9, 120:10, 120:19, 120:23, 121:3, 121:6, 122:10, 122:14, 123:3, 123:11, 126:2, 127:3, 127:13
beacon [1]-80:9
beat [1] - 40:1
beautiful [3]-3:13, 121:18
because [63]-4:20, 8:11, 12:23, 15:2, 17:11, 17:15, 22:3, 22:8, 22:19, 23:4,
27:2, 29:5, 31:20, 36:18, 39:10, 39:14, 51:12, 55:4, 56:14, 56:20, 59:4, 60:14, 67:4, 69:10, 72:8, 78:15, 88:6, 88:18, 89:10, 89:23, 90:8, 91:20, 91:21, 91:24, 92:11, 92:20, 102:5, 102:19, 104:1, 108:1, 108:2, 108:10, 109:6, 110:9, 110:11, 110:20, 110:21, 113:3, 113:23, 114:11, 117:25, 118:21, 119:14, 119:23, 120:17, 120:24, 121:12, 122:9, 124:11, 124:14, 124:18, 126:25, 127:4
become [5]-7:6, 26:6, 79:5, 82:13, 96:3
becomes [2]-69:8, 69:16 becoming [2] - 47:3, 95:9 been $[57]$ - 6:7, 6:10, 6:11, 9:7, 10:23, 16:22, 20:24, 23:14, 24:14, 27:12, 27:13, 27:18, 27:22, 45:1, 45:6, 49:12, 49:23, 51:17, 54:3, 54:13, 57:4, 59:5, 65:22, 66:25, 68:1, 70:2, 70:3, 74:24, 75:1, 82:17, 84:10, 84:11, 84:22, 85:3, 85:16, 86:1, 86:25, $90: 7,90: 25$, 94:13, 99:16, 100:9, 100:22, 101:1, 102:13, 102:25, 103:18, 105:18, 107:14, 109:7, 110:6, 119:19, 119:20, 121:21, 122:19, 125:10, 127:10 BEERS [1] - 80:13 Beers [2]-74:3, 80:18 BEERS-DIMITRIADIS [1] 80:13
Beers-Dimitriadis [2] - 74:3,


Brennan [1] - 4:6
Brewer [2]-13:14, 14:4 briefed [2] - 63:19, 66:25 briefly [3] - 14:14, 61:8, 64:22
bring [12] - 5:7, 8:21, 11:17, 12:17, 12:22, 32:1, 58:16, 60:10, 69:9, 69:25, 126:14, 127:6
broad [4]-57:6, 57:8,
109:11, 117:14
broader [2] - 64:6, 78:2
broadest [1] - 62:24
broadly [2] - 6:20, 75:7
Bronx [4] - 7:1, 83:22, 84:2
Brooklyn [3] - 87:20, 88:19, 102:2
brothers [1] - 64:18
brutality [1] - 10:15
budget $[6]-3: 11,75: 17$,
80:20, 82:4, 82:16, 87:17
Budgeting $[4]$ - 74:10, 77:2, 80:19, 86:22
budgeting [12]-76:7, 77:5, 80:17, 81:6, 81:11, 82:1, 83:1, 83:9, 83:17, 88:6, 90:4, 120:14
build [6] - 18:6, 57:6, 57:14, 75:18, 85:20, 126:15
building [3] - 3:13, 72:11, 102:10
buildings [1] - 62:10
built [1] - 3:1
bulk [1] - 15:11
bullet [1] - 32:13
bump [1] - 22:21
bundle [1] - 35:3
bundled [2] - 35:14, 36:8
bundles [1] - 97:3
bundling [4]-35:11, 35:16, 36:4, 36:22
bureaucracy [1] - 84:14
bus [1]-81:22
Business [2] - 48:24, 50:23
business [8] - 20:2, 20:12, 35:15, 99:11, 100:10, 100:22, 102:20, 115:23
businesses [3] - 20:17, 100:12, 101:10
but $[83]-5: 4,5: 13,21: 6$, 22:18, 23:24, 25:9, 27:17, 28:2, 30:8, 30:14, 32:12, 33:18, 33:22, 36:22, 37:18, 39:4, 39:16, 40:2, 43:2, 44:25, 48:15, 49:4, 52:17, 53:25, 54:14, 55:13, 56:15, 57:8, 58:2, 58:17, 59:8, 59:14, 60:4, 62:13, 63:10, 67:21, 71:8, 73:8, 75:5, 78:23, 79:6, 82:23, 83:20,

87:25, 88:4, 89:22, 90:7,
90:9, 91:11, 92:10, 95:6, 95:10, 96:3, 97:1, 97:23, 98:21, 104:8, 106:14, 108:8, 108:10, 109:20, 110:7, 110:14, 110:18, 110:24, 111:25, 112:8, 112:19, 112:22, 112:23, 113:2, 113:6, 113:22, 114:5, 119:6, 121:18, 122:11, 122:20, 123:14, 123:21, 124:19, 126:10 buys [1]-64:1
BuzzFeed [1] - 10:12
by [70]-11:5, 12:3, 16:18, 17:18, 19:5, 23:16, 23:25, 27:3, 27:22, 28:6, 33:23, 33:25, 35:4, 35:14, 37:4, 38:7, 41:8, 42:3, 42:17, 43:10, 43:11, 43:18, 45:6, 45:11, 47:9, 49:25, 50:1, 51:3, 52:18, 53:16, 58:18, 60:21, 63:19, 63:25, 64:5, 66:25, 68:21, 69:3, 69:21, 73:8, 74:21, 75:2, 75:3, $77: 12,78: 12,78: 14,81: 12$, 81:18, 86:17, 91:4, 91:6, 91:8, 91:13, 95:11, 99:17, 99:18, 100:24, 105:12, 105:18, 108:25, 110:6, 111:7, 115:16, 125:13, 126:3, 128:11

| $\mathbf{C}$ |
| :--- |
| $\mathbf{C}_{[3]}-1: 10,128: 1$ |
| California $[3]-38: 2,49: 10$, |

## 54:13

call $[4]-2: 2,12: 20,13: 6$, 104:16
called [4] - 5:11, 46:15, 47:5, 49:11
calling [1] - 60:6
calls [2] - 21:20, 34:6
Camarda [5] - 40:6, 48:5, 48:7, 51:23, 52:23
CAMARDA [4] - 48:6, 53:8, 54:7, 54:22
came [5] - 80:25, 91:18, 122:20, 125:18, 125:19
Campaign [8] - 9:17, 10:2,
35:17, 48:20, 49:3, 49:22, 52:25, 54:23
campaign [37] - 27:18, 27:20, 28:3, 28:6, 28:10, 38:13, 38:24, 46:2, 48:10, 48:12, 48:15, 48:21, 48:25, 50:8, 53:14, 53:25, 57:6, 63:6, 63:18, 64:6, 66:1, 66:19, 66:24, 72:9, 73:19, 90:22, 91:1, 95:19, 95:23,

96:9, 96:25, 105:25, 125:7, 125:13, 125:18, 126:18, 126:24
campaigning [5] - 56:17,
57:1, 67:11, 67:21, 96:12
campaigns [3] - 18:11,
31:18, 50:6
can [72] - 4:14, 5:12, 5:20, 11:3, 14:7, 15:3, 16:4, 26:1, 27:16, 28:17, 28:21, 28:24, 29:1, 29:2, 29:25, 30:2, 30:17, 31:13, 33:21, 34:1, 35:2, 36:20, 37:15, 38:17, 39:3, 40:3, 42:19, 43:1, 49:8, 53:1, 55:3, 55:5, 55:20, 59:1, 60:16, 61:14, 61:20, 63:3, 63:12, 64:9, 64:25, 65:2, 67:6, 70:22, 76:2, 77:10, 79:2, 80:5, 80:8, 85:20, 86:4, 87:18, 88:6, 88:7, 92:4, 96:12, 96:24, 98:6, 101:22, 107:6, 107:7, 112:7, 112:21, 112:23, 113:1, 114:13, 115:2, 118:21, 123:24, 127:6
can you [3] - 70:9, 90:2, 103:1
can't [10] - 39:24, 72:9,
72:10, 107:19, 111:25,
112:8, 112:22, 113:2,
114:4, 114:16
candid [2] - 57:24, 111:1
candidacies [1] - 65:14
candidate [16] - 33:4, 33:25,
50:17, 56:20, 57:16, 57:18,
57:21, 58:2, 63:18, 63:25,
64:5, 66:24, 67:12, 70:21,
91:11, 97:16
candidates [22]-27:23,
29:19, 45:13, 50:5, 50:14, 52:7, 52:11, 56:18, 57:13, 57:20, 64:8, 66:22, 67:3,
70:25, 71:1, 71:10, 72:4,
72:12, 96:16, 97:2, 110:20,
126:15
candidates' [1] - 71:2
cannot [6]-42:20, 43:2,
51:12, 107:15, 119:14, 124:2
canvasses [1]-63:17
canvassing [1] - 66:23
cap [3] - 50:3, 99:24, 126:8
capable [1] - 15:10
capital [4]-75:23, 82:11,
100:3, 100:15
capped [1] - 99:17
care [2] - 94:21, 124:14
carefully [1] - 24:4
cares [1] - 36:11

Carlos [1] - 37:14
Carolina [1] - 127:2
Carrion [1] - 102:16
cars [1] - 58:4
carts [3]-99:8, 99:20, 101:5
case [14]-22:2, 22:4, 23:9,
23:17, 23:19, 23:21, 23:25,
37:15, 37:18, 37:20, 71:12, 91:1, 97:6
cases [5] - 10:22, 12:8,
21:23, 37:17, 55:4
cash [1] - 71:25
cast [2] - 77:15, 82:19
casting [3]-47:7, 77:20, 78:5
Cause [1] - 50:2
cause [1] - 92:18
CBA [2] - 115:6, 115:10
CCRB [9]-11:2, 16:21,
16:23, 16:25, 17:1, 17:14,
21:15, 23:15, 23:18
CCRB's [1] - 11:5
Census [4]-123:1, 123:3, 123:17, 124:11
Center [3]-4:7, 56:6, 99:5
centers [1]-43:9
central [2] - 76:11, 76:16
centralized [1] - 49:11
centuries [1] - 47:13
century [3]-14:11, 15:13, 127:3
certain [13]-22:14, 22:20, 24:23, 24:25, 40:22, 59:1, 59:6, 67:8, 67:9, 91:19, 100:19, 119:6
certainly [3] - 6:20, 23:5, 23:24
certify [2] - 128:7, 128:10
Cesar [1] - 104:8
cetera [1] - 72:4
CFD [1] - 55:12
CFP [1] - 51:4
Chair [6]-1:15, 2:12, 2:19,
62:1, 62:2, 115:7
CHAIR [1] - 2:1
chairing [1] - 31:23
Chairperson [1] - 101:17
chairs [5] - 29:18, 37:11,
37:22, 38:8, 39:4
challenges [2] - 21:7, 27:21
challenging [2] - 2:23, 84:10
chance [5] - 45:11, 92:4, 101:7, 124:22, 126:12
change [19]-12:22, 20:7,
21:8, 29:8, 32:22, 56:15,
77:9, 79:5, 106:16, 109:23,
109:24, 110:4, 110:10,
111:13, 111:25, 112:5,
112:24, 112:25, 113:13
Change [1] - 104:17
change-makers [1] - 79:5
changed [6] - 33:15, 39:15,
90:9, 94:15, 110:4
changes [6] - 27:23, 28:10, 38:10, 60:17, 67:13,
111:24
changing [3]-109:22,
111:16, 113:8
chapter [1] - 125:1
charge [2] - 43:4, 99:23
charged [1] - 108:13
charismatic [1] - 110:20
charitable [1] - 68:2
charity [1] - 104:20
charter [3]-15:21, 104:6, 104:24
CHARTER [1] - 1:1
Charter [62]-2:3, 2:12, 4:22,
4:23, 5:6, 5:9, 5:12, 5:13,
5:14, 7:25, 8:1, 11:18,
11:20, 12:6, 12:12, 12:16, 12:17, 14:2, 14:17, 14:20, 14:24, 15:2, 15:6, 15:18, 16:2, 18:18, 19:3, 19:12, 19:25, 20:9, 20:18, 21:3,
25:20, 28:9, 47:19, 49:20,
55:21, 60:3, 60:17, 60:20,
64:20, 67:13, 71:17, 75:8, 95:5, 99:13, 100:17, 104:13, 104:14, 104:17, 104:18, 105:4, 107:8, 111:23, 115:8, 116:22, 116:23, 116:24, 118:13, 120:24, 122:25
Charter-mandated [1] - 16:2
chasing [1] - 33:6
check [1]-35:17
checks [6]-33:1, 33:7, 33:8,
35:4, 36:5, 123:12
Chhaya [1] - 4:1
children [1] - 84:2
children's [1] - 89:5
Chinatown [6] - 117:10,
117:11, 117:15, 117:16, 117:21, 119:10
choice [12] - 44:22, 45:1,
45:3, 45:5, 45:10, 57:1,
57:20, 57:25, 58:9, 92:16,
92:21, 97:5
choose [1] - 96:25
chorus [1] - 127:18
chosen [3]-24:14, 32:3,
41:17
circumstances [2] - 33:16, 59:1
cities [16] - 20:25, 26:21, 26:22, 44:6, 44:9, 44:13, $44: 25,45: 2,47: 24,57: 2$, 57:4, 63:3, 76:4, 76:5, 106:18, 125:4
citing [1] - 107:20
citizen [5] - 29:9, 38:9,
53:24, 61:1, 82:19
Citizens [4] - 30:4, 55:4, 104:17, 104:18
citizens [8] - 13:11, 23:8,
41:21, 60:22, 61:5, 69:24, 83:11, 121:20
city [102] - 2:23, 3:9, 5:22,
$12: 15,14: 17,15: 1,15: 3$,
15:8, 15:18, 20:2, 20:11, 24:13, 24:17, 25:11, 26:16, 31:19, 31:25, 34:8, 34:23, $35: 13,35: 15,35: 22,36: 2$, 37:5, 38:7, 42:3, 42:4, 45:3, 47:9, 47:21, 48:18, 49:6, 50:14, 51:10, 53:11, 53:21, 55:20, 57:11, 58:8, 59:7, 59:10, 60:3, 62:9, 63:13, 70:17, 71:12, 71:13, 73:2, 73:13, 74:25, 75:13, 75:14, 75:17, 75:23, 76:8, 77:9, 77:18, 77:20, 78:5, 78:12, 79:8, 82:7, 86:7, 86:15, 87:1, 87:2, 87:4, 88:5, 88:16, 88:22, 90:9, 91:7, 93:16, 96:10, 97:9, 98:1, 99:9, 99:22, 100:2, 100:5, 100:18, 106:4, 108:14, 111:7, 115:12, 115:13, 115:15, 115:18, 115:19, 115:23, 115:25, 116:3, 116:5, 116:15, 116:18, 117:17, 121:14, 122:6, 122:14, 124:3 City [116] - 4:15, 4:24, 5:6, 5:14, 6:7, 6:12, 12:17, 13:7, 13:20, 15:6, 18:5, 19:1, 19:3, 19:22, 19:23, 20:3, 20:5, 20:20, 20:23, 21:1, 21:3, 21:5, 25:8, 25:19, 28:1, 28:16, 29:4, 29:15, 29:18, 31:5, 31:6, 31:24, 35:10, 35:25, 38:3, 39:25, 41:9, 42:1, 43:5, 43:19, 43:21, 44:1, 44:2, 46:4, 46:6, 46:7, 46:19, 47:4, 48:14, 49:9, 56:13, 57:10, 60:1, 60:13, 60:17, 60:20, 60:23, 60:24, 61:4, 61:14, 61:15, 62:20, 66:8, $72: 23,73: 18,73: 19,74: 12$, 75:4, 75:10, 77:8, 77:13, 77:24, 78:9, 80:3, 80:8, 80:20, 83:12, 83:25, 88:1, 91:2, 93:14, 93:18, 93:24, 95:24, 96:21, 97:20, 97:24, 98:10, 99:12, 100:8, 100:12, 100:17, 100:23,
101:16, 102:16, 104:13,

105:3, 105:10, 105:13, 105:15, 105:21, 106:6, 106:8, 106:15, 106:20, 107:2, 113:19, 114:10, 115:8, 115:10, 115:13, 116:22, 116:24, 117:7, 117:13, 122:3
city's [6]-13:14, 13:25, 21:7,
55:8, 79:7, 80:7
City's [3] - 4:23, 27:19, 46:19
city-related [1] - 116:15
Citywide [1] - 80:18
citywide [12] - 29:3, 51:8,
74:18, 74:20, 76:5, 78:22,
80:17, 83:1, 83:24, 87:3,
92:20, 99:16
Civic [15] - 54:4, 74:17,
77:13, 78:8, 79:3, 79:10,
$79: 24,80: 5,80: 16,83: 5$,
83:18, 88:13, 120:6, 121:5,
122:9
civic [17] - 13:7, 14:12,
15:25, 63:11, 77:19, 78:3,
78:12, 79:8, 79:18, 80:6,
81:11, 82:2, 87:18, 88:2,
88:10, 126:15
civically [1] - 78:22
civics [5] - 86:20, 87:5,
87:11, 87:14, 89:16
civil [3] - 45:25, 119:25,
121:15
Civil [2] - 23:7, 112:2
Civilian [6]-9:18, 10:3, 10:9,
10:24, 11:18, $24: 9$
clarity [1] - 25:16
class [6] - 86:20, 87:12,
87:14, 87:15, 89:16,
126:20
clean [4]-30:6, 30:7, 36:8,
36:9
clear [4]-37:6, 43:20, 44:18,
77:9
clearly [1] - 63:7
clears [1]-12:9
Clerk's [2] - 48:18, 49:6
clients [1] - 50:24
climate [2] - 20:7, 21:8
clip [1] - 101:20
clock [1]-8:4
close [2] - 9:10, 112:25
closed [1] - 46:9
closely [2] - 66:13, 104:14
closer [2] - 77:24, 109:24
club [1] - 36:7
Club [3] - 36:11, 40:16, 103:9
Clubs [1] - 46:6
cluster [2] - 24:14, 24:17
co [5] - 3:4, 12:11, 74:14,
77:1, 93:3
co-commissioner [1] - 3:4
co-executive [1] - 74:14 co-facilitator [1] - 77:1
co-founders [1] - 93:3
co-workers [1]-12:11
coalition [3]-10:4, 57:7, 62:24
coalitions [2]-18:11, 57:14
coffee [1] - 101:5
Cohen [5] - 74:3, 76:20,
76:25, 86:13, 86:16
COHEN [3] - 76:22, 86:22, 87:23
coherent [1] - 56:20
collaborate [2] - 84:21, 85:19
collaborative [1] - 85:24
Collaborative [1] - 56:6
collaboratively [1] - 82:9
colleague [1] - 74:14
colleagues [3] - 33:18, 37:11
collective [4]-14:8, 41:19,
68:5, 68:11
college [1] - 120:1
College [3] - 4:4, 117:7, 117:8
Color [1] - 93:3
color [2] - 25:6, 93:6
Columbia [1] - 106:7
combined [1] - 91:4
come [18] - 5:2, 5:8, 9:22,
31:10, 63:12, 73:5, 77:21,
84:21, 87:17, 88:18, 107:7,
112:23, 116:14, 119:13,
119:22, 124:9, 125:5, 127:12
comes [3] - 31:10, 32:20, 35:5
coming [12] - 4:8, 21:9, 31:19, 37:19, 39:10, 39:20, 59:8, 73:14, 86:14, 87:20, 95:3, 107:13
comment [5] - 8:20, 23:4, 23:11, 23:12, 34:25
comments [4]-5:2, 7:25, 89:2, 107:9
commission [3]-3:3, 21:23, 108:23
COMMISSION [1] - 1:1
Commission [46] - 2:3, 2:12,
3:15, 4:23, 5:8, 5:11, 5:14, 6:19, 7:16, 12:13, 12:16, 12:20, 14:7, 15:19, 18:22, 19:2, 19:11, 19:20, 20:1, 20:9, 20:13, 20:19, 21:21, 28:5, 28:9, 41:6, 47:19, 49:12, 49:16, 49:21, 52:25, 53:9, 58:7, 58:23, 59:23, 64:25, 67:19, 74:15, 76:19, 76:23, 82:25, 104:18, 105:1, 105:23, 116:22,

councilman [1] - 123:8
Councilman [1] - 37:1
councilmanic [1]-86:17
Counsel [1] - 105:21
countdowns [1] - 81:22
counted [3]-63:17, 66:23,
67:15
countries [1] - 62:12
country [4]-27:20, 44:6,
56:10, 59:9
COUNTY [1] - 128:4
county [1] - 38:17
couple [3]-21:17, 95:17, 119:25
course [2]-4:21, 6:5
court [2] - 27:21, 55:4
Court [5] - 42:24, 43:16,
110:7, 112:2
Courts [1] - 103:16
courts [1] - 105:20
cover [1] - 94:9
covered [1] - 49:25
create [8] - 26:23, 28:6, 35:18, 41:7, 45:12, 93:5, 96:3, 105:11
created [3]-26:22, 72:5, 82:6
creation [5]-20:14, 20:19,
83:18, 84:25, 85:1
creative [1] - 81:15
credit [2] - 54:22, 71:23
Criminal [1] - 117:8
criminal [3]-12:5, 123:15, 123:16
crises [1] - 18:20
crisis [5] - 10:12, 12:14,
12:19, 20:7, 22:19
Cristina [2] - 90:15, 93:2
criteria [2]-20:2, 25:16
critical [1] - 5:24
crowded [1] - 87:20
crucial [1] - 106:4
cull [1] - 5:5
CUNY's [1] - 3:7
current [13]-10:24, 11:21,
23:3, 23:5, 28:25, 36:4,
61:23, 63:13, 73:18, 75:18,
95:23, 99:14, 103:19
currently [12]-3:7, 16:2,
21:15, 22:4, 29:22, 60:3,
72:22, 92:9, 93:14, 93:15,
112:7, 118:20
curtailed [1]-60:21
curtailing [1] - 52:20
curve [1] - 57:10
cutoff [2]-113:14, 113:20
cycle [2] - 31:19, 55:15
cycles [2] - 74:12, 80:21
Cynthia [1] - 97:13

| D |
| :--- | :--- |
| D.C $[2]-66: 1,106: 11$ |
| DA's $[1]-12: 9$ |
| dad [1] $-121: 25$ |
| daily $[4]-78: 6,78: 12,85: 7$, |
| 102:14 |
| DALE $[1]-1: 17$ |
| Dale $[1]-4: 9$ |
| dangerous $[3]-46: 11$, |
| 100:6, 100:13 |
| data $[14]-13: 8,13: 13,13: 15$, |

definition [2] - 39:12, 94:20
Development ${ }_{[1]}$ - 4:1
definitions [1] - 94:17
definitive $[1]$ - 43:22
delegate [4]-80:20, 85:1,
85:16, 111:21
delegates [4]-14:21, 85:8,
85:13, 85:17
Delgado [2] - 90:14, 90:17
DELGADO [1] - 90:18
delighted ${ }_{[2]}-3: 4,6: 22$
deliver [1] - 57:22
Delrawn [1] - 10:20
demands [1] - 12:15
democracy [36] - 4:6, 5:17,
14:8, 14:11, 15:13, 19:4, 19:6, 21:4, 29:7, 35:11,
36:15, 39:5, 43:5, 44:21,
46:12, 58:23, 59:24, 60:9,
62:19, 64:23, 66:3, 69:16,
79:12, 83:11, 86:2, 95:12,
96:19, 105:2, 105:10,
106:3, 107:1, 107:21,
108:13, 108:24, 109:6, 120:3
Democracy [1] - 56:7
democratic [8] - 5:22, 41:25,
62:25, 64:12, 72:8, 77:22,
80:7, 84:5
Democratic [1] - 46:9
democratically [1] - 20:14
demographic [1]-25:11
demographics [2] - 74:25, 86:6
denying [1]-63:23
department [2] - 10:18, 23:21
Department [1]-103:24
deposit [1] - 20:4
deposits [1]-19:22
depth [3]-11:23, 22:5, 53:16
deputy [1]-18:3
descriptions [1] - 126:23
deserves [1] - 86:9
design [4]-13:8, 13:18, 15:17, 16:6
designated [1] - 23:16
designed $[3]$ - 28:8, 52:10, 95:25
detailed [2] - 64:16, 73:23
details [1] - 53:10
determination [4]-23:25,
118:1, 118:2, 118:6
determinations [1] - 115:15
determine [2]-42:19, 43:1
determined [1] - 47:9
develop [1] - 3:2
developers [1] - 19:10
developing [1] - 78:18
development $[5]$ - 18:15,
19:7, 20:15, 26:18, 26:25
developments [1] - 31:13
device [1]-14:19
devices [1] - 7:9
dialing [1]-33:2
Diana [1] - 37:12
did [11] - 3:1, 33:24, 35:12,
37:14, 53:13, 70:1, 89:8, 102:8, 124:18, 125:16, 126:6
did they $[1]$ - 43:16
didn't [5] - 34:11, 91:5, 107:25, 122:5, 122:6
die [2] - 31:4, 35:13
difference [2] - 52:10, 58:7
different ${ }_{[16]}-5: 3,13: 24$,
14:21, 25:5, 35:9, 36:18,
38:18, 44:7, 44:14, 87:2,
94:16, 95:17, 114:17,
116:7, 116:13, 118:12
differently $[1]$ - 115:16
difficult [1] - 76:13
difficulty ${ }_{[2]}-59: 19,60: 6$
diffused [1] - 100:24
digital [4] - 13:21, 14:9,
14:10, 15:12
Dimitriadis [2] - 74:3, 80:18
DIMITRIADIS [1] - 80:13
direct $[2]$ - 4:6, 61:5
directed $[4]-67: 22,67: 23$, 86:12, 124:15
direction [1] - 49:24
directions [1] - 59:11
directly [4]-60:2, 81:13, 84:21, 88:12
director [9]-3:25, 4:10,
13:9, 18:3, 27:16, 30:2, 62:6, 74:15, 99:4
disaggregated [1] - 48:13
disciplinary [3] - 11:5, 23:9, 103:13
discipline [1] - 12:1
disclosed [1] - 51:2
disclosure [3] - 35:7, 54:21, 55:5
disconnected [1] - 67:2
discretion [1] - 92:7
discriminated [1] - 52:18
discrimination [1]-45:14
discriminatory [1] - 18:12
discuss [2] - 7:18, 48:9
discussing [1] - 30:2
discussion [1] - 97:11
discussions [1] - 22:5 disenfranchised [1] - 61:22
disincentive [1] - 64:11
disinterest [1] - 77:17
disinterested [1] - 105:19
disparate [1] - 116:12
dispel [1] - 95:22
disposal [1] - 79:23
disposition [1] - 19:15
dispositions [1] - 31:22
dissatisfaction [2] - 121:8, 121:10
distinction [1] - 43:7
distress [1] - 59:16
distribute [1] - 74:5
District [10]-77:5, 80:21,
86:18, 106:7, 111:20,
112:1, 112:9, 112:20,
112:22, 113:2
district [14] - 16:3, 22:8,
22:13, 29:19, 29:22, 33:7, 34:4, 39:12, 39:15, 80:23, 82:23, 83:23, 85:13, 111:22
districts [16] - 22:15, 22:20, 24:12, 24:14, 24:18, 24:19, 24:23, 25:9, 25:11, 34:9, 75:22, 87:4, 90:3, 90:6, 91:25
distrust [1] - 77:18
diverse [3]-79:20, 115:13, 116:7
diversity [2] - 115:17, 126:20
divided [1] - 123:6
divisions [1] - 56:8
do [58] - 4:14, 14:24, 17:15,
20:2, 26:10, 26:15, 32:22,
34:17, 36:13, 36:22, 38:22,
38:23, 38:24, 39:7, 43:4,
49:17, 52:4, 52:10, 55:3,
55:20, 59:2, 61:16, 61:21,
71:20, 73:3, 73:11, 73:16,
76:5, 85:13, 87:21, 88:21,
89:14, 92:2, 95:22, 96:13, 97:17, 97:18, 104:8, 105:18, 107:17, 107:18, 110:13, 110:15, 114:4, 114:16, 116:18, 118:13, 119:25, 120:2, 120:24, 121:1, 123:24, 124:3, 124:15, 124:16, 124:17, 124:19, 128:7
do you [4] - 33:13, 54:2, 71:23, 89:3
DOE [2]-75:20, 89:15
does [6]-20:11, 78:17, 94:9,
97:1, 117:21, 122:17
does that [1] - 91:10
doesn't [9]-22:10, 56:15, 57:21, 60:24, 68:7, 85:25, 110:7, 110:8, 113:4
Doing [2] - 48:24, 50:23
doing [10] - 26:5, 35:15, 39:24, 73:9, 86:21, 89:20, 102:20, 107:13, 113:22, 117:5

DOIT [4] - 14:23, 15:1, 16:2, 16:4
dollar [4] - 28:17, 28:20, 28:22, 100:7
dollars [14]-20:4, 20:6, 31:9, 32:17, 32:21, 32:25, 33:2, 33:24, 36:21, 37:21, 41:19, 106:20, 109:15, 126:3
don't [32]-17:10, 29:6, 32:9, 34:15, 35:1, 38:6, 38:22, 39:20, 53:15, 55:9, 55:11, 56:22, 60:2, 61:12, 61:13, 68:25, 72:9, 73:15, 73:24, 84:14, 91:21, 92:22, 96:15, 97:22, 107:23, 108:17, 109:13, 112:13, 115:3, 119:15
donating [1] - 96:15
donations [3] - 50:6, 125:18, 125:19
done [13]-23:13, 24:1, 53:14, 53:15, 55:12, 86:17, 95:4, 96:2, 96:19, 112:18, 118:21, 122:5
donor [2] - 55:18, 65:21
donors [8] - 28:16, 55:8, 96:7, 96:15, 96:23, 125:15, 126:20, 126:21
door $[3]-29: 14,64: 14,66: 11$
doors [2] - 28:21, 71:4
down [8]-12:2, 27:6, 31:6, 45:4, 112:12, 115:4, 122:24, 123:4
downloadable [1] - 15:11
dozens [1] - 62:13
draconian [1] - 46:15
draft [1] - 70:2
drafted [1] - 12:11
dragged [1] - 127:3
dramatically [1] - 60:21
dream [2] - 101:11, 120:9
driven [2] - 13:10, 25:23
driver's [1] - 19:9
drop [1] - 109:8
drop-off [1] - 109:8
dropped [1] - 108:25
drowning [1] - 34:5
dual [1] - 85:18
due [2]-11:24, 81:25
during [3] - 28:1, 67:7, 106:22
duty [4]-12:7, 12:16, 77:19, 78:3

| $E$ |
| :---: |
| $\begin{aligned} & \hline \mathbf{e}[1]-6: 10 \\ & \mathbf{E}[5]-1: 10,74: 3,128: 1 \\ & \text { e-mails }[1]-6: 10 \end{aligned}$ |

each [16] - 2:7, 8:9, 8:12, 9:10, 9:22, 22:2, 35:8, 57:18, 66:10, 75:10, 106:25, 115:16, 116:6, 116:7, 116:19, 116:20
ear [1]-116:5
earlier [2] - 24:22, 81:6
early [8] - 5:23, 10:13, 65:1, 79:13, 84:8, 105:7, 106:6,
111:16
earn [1] - 40:13
easier [3] - 65:19, 96:1,
105:12
easiest [1] - 56:19
easing [1] - 106:4
East [2] - 24:25, 117:16
easy [2] - 87:19, 124:2
echo [1] - 81:3
ecological [2]-18:8, 18:21
economic [10] - 18:12,
18:21, 19:4, 19:6, 21:4,
21:5, 26:11, 26:25, 27:2, 57:15
Economics [2] - 20:20,
26:10
economies [1] - 53:20
economy [1] - 19:5
Economy [1] - 18:4
educated [1] - 82:5
educating [1] - 72:2
education [4]-78:10, 88:10,
90:20, 120:25
Education [2]-80:22, 103:25
EDWARDS [2] - 128:6, 128:19
effect [10] - 30:10, 34:16,
64:24, 105:23, 112:17,
112:18, 112:19, 115:20,
116:9, 116:13
effective [3]-26:6, 115:12, 116:9
effectively [2] - 50:4, 85:22
efficient [3]-13:22, 83:7, 109:16
effort [5] - 25:23, 62:4,
69:23, 84:13, 95:7
efforts [8]-26:1, 63:4, 64:4,
64:6, 77:11, 100:22,
100:24, 125:7
egregious [1] - 69:2
Eight [1] - 80:25
eight [1] - 81:24
eighty [1] - 80:25
either [4]-11:6, 63:22,
79:15, 116:22
elaborate [5]-26:14, 43:6,
53:2, 68:15, 70:10
elect [1] - 17:3
Elected [2] - 9:17, 10:3
elected [35]-8:17, 8:25, 10:9, 11:18, 11:21, 11:22, 17:13, 17:21, 24:8, 25:18, 26:2, 27:24, 31:16, 32:22, 33:5, 37:4, 38:12, 38:15, 38:16, 38:18, 57:18, 59:18, 60:2, 60:5, 68:16, 68:21, 69:7, 69:13, 80:4, 91:18, 97:17, 116:3, 118:25,
123:10, 126:16
electing [1] - 97:21
election [42]-29:24, 30:10,
34:24, 34:25, 40:24, 41:22,
43:10, 43:19, 43:22, 43:23,
43:25, 44:11, 44:12, 46:14,
54:24, 55:15, 55:17, 55:22,
57:17, 65:4, 65:8, 67:7,
71:22, 77:16, 97:7, 104:10,
104:11, 108:5, 109:22,
109:25, 110:5, 110:19,
111:19, 111:25, 112:23,
113:2, 113:4, 113:15,
113:19
Election [1] - 106:21
elections [61] - 4:12, 5:19,
30:7, 34:23, 36:9, 41:1,
41:8, 42:16, 43:7, 43:8,
44:10, 44:17, 46:4, 47:21,
47:22, 47:25, 48:16, 48:22,
51:9, 56:16, 56:17, 58:1,
63:15, 65:12, 66:11, 69:8,
70:16, 70:17, 70:18, 70:23,
73:13, 74:17, 75:1, 77:21,
79:16, 91:17, 91:19, 97:10,
105:12, 105:17, 105:25,
106:2, 106:10, 106:22,
106:24, 107:20, 108:1,
108:2, 108:9, 108:19,
109:6, 109:9, 109:16,
111:12, 111:13, 111:24,
113:14, 113:18, 113:21,
126:2, 126:13
Elections [3]-48:21, 51:14, 92:21
electoral [4]-46:16, 63:1, 63:5, 109:11
electorate [1] - 52:13
electricity $[1]$ - 122:1
elements [2] - 14:11, 15:13
elevate [1] - 60:17
Elias [3] - 9:3, 9:16, 10:1
eligible [1] - 91:14
eliminate [4]-18:12, 100:19, 106:19, 107:25
eliminated [2]-107:23,
108:2
eliminating [2] - 50:4, 56:25
else [2]-53:2, 122:20
elsewhere [1] - 64:24
emblematic [1] - 79:12
embrace [1] - 106:23
emphasize [2] - 95:17,
115:11
employee [1] - 68:3
employees [4]-93:14,
93:16, 93:18, 93:25
empower [4] - 29:9, 29:25,
61:17, 63:9
empowered [2]-10:9, 12:23
empowers [1] - 11:21
enable [2]-14:17, 75:21
enact [2] - 42:13, 105:16
enacted [5] - 45:2, 66:1,
71:16, 99:25, 106:8
enacting [1] - 66:2
encourage [5] - 32:21,
62:21, 82:24, 86:21, 98:3
encouraging [4]-72:2,
79:22, 87:16, 87:21
end [12] - $3: 18,29: 14,35: 21$,
36:1, 38:15, 39:9, 45:13,
80:3, 96:14, 96:15, 102:1,
125:4
ended [2]-13:24, 91:20
endless [1] - 95:7
ends [1]-71:6
energized [1] - 110:11
energy [1] - 95:8
enforce [1] - 41:5
enforcement [1] - 54:1
engage [8] - 5:18, 64:17,
70:23, 71:21, 78:25, 79:25,
87:17, 122:11
engaged [1] - 64:4
engagement [19]-53:25,
63:11, 63:23, 65:12, 70:13,
73:10, 77:4, 78:3, 80:7,
80:10, 81:12, 84:4, 84:17, 85:4, 86:14, 87:18, 88:2,
121:7, 126:15
Engagement [15] - 54:4, 74:18, 77:13, 78:8, 79:4, 79:10, 79:25, 80:5, 80:16, 83:6, 83:18, 88:14, 120:6, 121:5, 122:9
engagements [1]-82:2
engaging [3] - 72:7, 78:1, 81:12
enhance [1] - 109:3
enhanced [2]-105:6, 111:16
enhancing [2] - 64:23,
108:13
enough [5] - 29:6, 51:13, 100:3, 100:15, 120:24
enrollment [6] - 105:6, 112:5, 112:14, 112:15, 112:25, 113:10
enshrine [2]-14:18, 19:13
ensure [5] - 6:19, 19:17, 62:14, 63:5, 76:2
ensuring [2] - 70:11, 88:17 entered [1] - 6:16 enthusiastic [2]-5:25, 85:4 entire [6] - 5:12, 8:11, 57:8, 104:5, 119:4, 120:23 entirely [1] - 11:4
entity [4] - 49:3, 49:11, 53:19, 68:12
environment [2] - 36:12, 87:25
environmental [4]-2:13,
2:22, 117:24, 118:11
equal [6] - 3:14, 17:22,
28:17, 45:3, 52:19, 88:23
equally [1] - 45:8
equip [1] - 79:6
equity $[3]-18: 8,18: 24,93: 5$
equivalency [1] - 68:2
equivalent [1] - 50:13
Erdman [2] - 56:1, 56:3
ERDMAN [1] - 56:4
Eric [1]-10:19
esoteric [1] - 35:20
especially [6] - 28:2, 32:2,
56:16, 75:25, 88:18, 125:20
espousing [1] - 21:18 essential [2] - 62:24, 116:17 essentially [7] - 4:24, 5:4,
82:2, 102:8, 102:15, 102:17, 103:25
establish [1] - 24:8
established [2] - 91:11, 105:24
establishes [2] - 12:6, 19:25
establishing [3] - 77:12,
77:25, 80:15
establishment [2] - 19:21, 83:5
estate [8]-31:10, 31:17,
$32: 4,33: 24,38: 14,38: 15$, 96:22
et [1] - 72:4
ethics [5] - 48:15, 48:20, 49:10, 53:25, 54:11
ethnic [2] - 6:14, 97:22
ethnically [1] - 115:14
ethnicity [1] - 2:18
Euros [1] - 76:10
eve [2] - 106:10, 109:22
even [18] - 14:25, 32:7, 34:11, 41:14, 67:9, 69:12, 71:18, 90:21, 91:3, 93:17, 113:20, 116:5, 118:8, 122:11, 123:1, 124:14, 125:11, 125:22
evening $[34]-3: 6,3: 20,3: 24$, 4:2, 4:8, 4:9, 4:16, 9:25, 16:16, 18:2, 21:14, 21:20, 27:14, 42:10, 45:21, 48:6,

58:12, 58:16, 62:1, 62:2,
66:6, 74:8, 76:22, 80:13,
83:8, 83:15, 92:25, 94:25,
95:2, 98:5, 99:3, 104:3,
117:3, 127:14
evening's [1] - 81:4
evenings [1] - 98:8
events [3]-59:14, 67:9
ever [4]-23:19, 30:15,
31:11, 82:19
every [19]-4:21, 5:13, 6:11, 15:14, 28:17, 28:20, 33:3,
$37: 18,39: 14,41: 3,45: 3$,
48:1, 54:24, 73:2, 76:10,
84:24, 94:7, 96:23, 99:23
everybody [4] - 16:16, 56:9,
119:24, 122:17
everybody's [2] - 119:21, 124:23
everyday [3]-26:2, 78:4,
121:20
everyone [15] - 2:1, 7:10, 8:4, 8:12, 9:4, 9:12, 36:8, 36:12, 41:9, 42:8, 81:10, 97:12, 102:9, 127:10, 127:14
everything [2] - 26:19,
113:25
evicted [1] - 103:22
exact [1] - 86:14
exactly [2]-25:16, 120:8
examine [1] - 116:24
example [4]-55:13, 63:16, 86:14, 107:24
examples [2] - 19:15, 26:21
excel [1] - 93:7
except $[3]-11: 8,50: 14$, 60:19
excited [2] - 122:8, 127:5
excitement [1] - 82:20
exclude [1] - 63:5
excluded [2] - 78:16, 79:17
exclusionary [1] - 46:13
exclusively [1] - 84:7
excuse [2] - 105:8, 106:11
executive [8]-3:25, 13:9,
27:16, 28:13, 30:2, 74:14,
107:6, 122:4
exempt [1] - 25:18
exercised [1] - 81:25
exist [1] - 85:6
existing [2] - 28:10, 126:4
exists [1] - 15:4
expand [6]-75:6, 79:11,
93:13, 94:4, 94:16, 100:1
expanded [2] - 87:3, 94:23
expanding [3]-50:24, 82:25, 93:23
expansion [5] - 80:16, 83:6, 87:8, 93:11, 120:14
expect $[1]-34: 11$
expected [1] - 30:19
expecting [1] - 30:16
expenditure [2] - 33:23,
71:20
expenditures [8] - 30:3,
51:2, 55:3, 55:7, 64:2,
64:7, 70:13
expense [1] - 75:24
expenses [3] - 63:16, 72:16,
72:18
expensive [1] - 14:15
experience [6] - 77:6, 85:24,
88:1, 89:4, 121:13, 122:22
experienced [1] - 84:7
experiences [2] - 78:7, 78:12
experiment [1] - 75:5
experiments [1]-75:5
expert [2]-7:18, 98:4
expertise [3]-5:3, 53:21, 55:2
experts [2]-98:9, 105:19
explain [1] - 54:19
explicitly [1] - 20:21
exploring [1] - 95:21
exposure [2]-121:13,
121:19
expressing [1] - 116:21
expression [1] - 46:10
extend [2] - 78:9, 94:20
extends [1] - 77:22
extensive [2] - 6:4, 53:13
extensively [2] - 61:9,
104:22
extent [2] - 55:20, 77:19
extra [2]-24:22, 106:19
extract [1] - 20:5
extraction [1] - 19:18
extremely [1] - 115:13

| $\quad$ F |
| :--- |
| $F_{[1]}-128: 1$ |
| fabric $[1]-78: 4$ |
| face $[7]-47: 11,56: 14$, |
| $57: 18,63: 21,69: 2,82: 21$, |
| $105: 15$ |
| Facebook [1] - 6:17 |
| facilitate $[2]-16: 5,83: 6$ |
| facilitating $[1]-78: 20$ |
| facilitator [1] - 77:1 |
| fact $[7]-22: 6,33: 20,56: 16$, |
| $60: 19,61: 14,103: 20$, |
| $108: 5$ |
| fact-oriented $[1]-22: 6$ |
| facts $[1]-46: 18$ |
| factual $[1]-23: 24$ |
| failed $[1]-102: 5$ |
| failure $[1]-92: 10$ |
| Fair [1] - 49:11 |

2018 CHARTER REVISION - 5/9/2018 - MANHATTAN

fair [6] - 4:13, 17:8, 23:22, 28:6, 42:23, 45:11
fair-game [1] - 23:22
fairly [1] - 69:2
fairness [1] - 51:1
Fairway [1] - 100:11
faith [1] - 126:16
falafel [1] - 101:6
fall [1] - 81:14
falling [1] - 78:17
false [1]-68:1
familiar [1] - 57:24
families [6] - 16:23, 17:8, 17:14, 62:15, 94:13, 94:15
family [9]-94:6, 94:8, 94:11, 94:17, 94:20, 94:22, 103:7
famous [1] - 95:9
fan [2] - 36:17, 37:10
fantasy [1] - 119:23
far [4]-14:22, 30:9, 64:12, 77:22
fascinating [1] - 119:19
fashioned [1] - 105:3
fast [2]-20:21, 124:24
fast-growing [1] - 20:21
favor [3]-58:9, 106:14, 127:17
federal [8] - 21:8, 42:15,
70:16, 70:17, 70:23, 79:15, 124:10
feedback [2] - 10:5, 14:5 feel [7]-17:14, 67:3, 67:6, 74:6, 126:10, 126:11
feels [1] - 60:5
Felix [6] - 56:2, 64:8, 66:7, 73:5, 73:11, 73:21
felons [1] - 79:14
few [8] - 14:16, 24:7, 68:13, 83:23, 93:8, 121:20, 121:22, 122:21
fewer [2] - 77:14, 109:6
field [4] - 45:13, 53:22,
118:8, 118:9
Figaro [1] - 56:2
fight [6] - 12:21, 47:15, 62:14, 63:12, 66:12, 67:4
fighting [2] - 63:4, 78:21
Figueroa [4]-64:8, 66:5, 66:7, 70:9
FIGUEROA [1] - 66:6 figure [2] - 15:23, 68:23 fill [1] - 96:6
final [6] - 44:5, 82:17, 114:21, 114:23, 115:2
finalized [1] - 114:1
finally [3] - 20:13, 44:20, 123:10
Finance [6] - 35:17, 48:20, 49:3, 49:22, 52:25, 54:23
finance [26] - 19:5, 27:18, 27:20, 28:4, 28:6, 28:10, 48:10, 48:12, 48:15, 48:21, 48:25, 54:1, 63:13, 65:24, 66:2, 66:19, 67:22, 73:19, 90:23, 95:19, 95:23, 96:9, 105:25, 125:7, 126:19, 126:24
financial [6] - 18:17, 20:6, 20:17, 27:1, 96:22, 103:7
financing [4] - 20:8, 91:9, 108:22, 126:8
find $[7]-17: 10,33: 1,55: 6$, 79:1, 79:2, 81:18, 91:25
finding [1] - 16:20
fine [3]-34:15, 39:1, 107:18
fines [2] - 96:10, 100:7
first [34]-6:25, 9:3, 14:9, 14:14, 19:13, 20:18, 21:19, 21:20, 24:9, 28:15, 40:23, 41:10, 44:10, 45:5, 48:12, 50:16, 50:19, 54:12, 57:20, 59:11, 60:22, 69:4, 70:15, 81:1, 82:19, 86:13, 89:23, 90:17, 93:13, 99:1, 107:18, 118:6, 119:18, 122:17
First [2] - 43:12, 52:20
first-time [1]-81:1
fitting [1] - 3:15
five [3]-2:6, 2:7, 29:21
flat [1] - 11:7
flat-out [1] - 11:7
fliers [1] - 66:12
flights [2] - 34:3
floor [1] - 8:21
focus [4]-2:13, 2:15, 9:7, 58:22
focused [7] - 4:21, 6:13, 7:21, 9:5, 47:16, 72:7, 83:19
focusing [3] - 2:22, 72:1, 72:6
folks [12] - 4:14, 29:5, 29:6, 33:18, 34:14, 34:17, 39:20,
84:11, 95:15, 95:16,
114:16, 121:16
follow [3] - 6:18, 31:14, 47:24
followed [1] - 6:5
following [3] - 76:3, 77:8, 118:7
food [7] - 71:7, 99:7, 99:14, 99:16, 99:20, 100:5, 100:18
foot [1] - 27:13
foothold [1] - 100:10
footing [1] - 102:18
for $[323]-2: 5,2: 25,3: 12$, 3:14, 3:15, 4:7, 4:8, 4:20, $4: 24,5: 18,7: 2,7: 16,7: 18$,

8:6, 8:12, 8:24, 9:10, 9:17, 9:19, 10:2, 10:8, 10:21, 11:18, 11:24, 12:4, 12:12, 12:21, 12:25, 13:2, 13:20, 16:17, 16:22, 17:20, 17:24, 18:10, 18:21, 19:6, 19:13, 19:19, 19:21, 20:2, 20:11, 20:15, 21:9, 21:11, 21:20, 21:25, 22:18, 23:15, 24:2, 24:18, 24:19, 24:23, 26:3, 26:4, 27:5, 27:9, 27:11, 28:4, 29:3, 29:4, 29:10, 29:11, 29:20, 29:21, 29:22, 30:6, 30:10, 31:4, 31:8, 31:15, 31:17, 31:24, 32:6, 32:7, 32:17, 32:24, 33:1, 33:2, 33:6, 33:7, 34:13, 35:12, 35:13, 36:13, 38:23, 39:5, 39:8, 39:11, 39:17, 39:18, 39:23, 40:8, 40:14, 40:17, 40:18, 40:20, 41:7, 43:11, 45:13, 45:22, 46:4, 47:11, 47:13, 47:14, 47:15, 47:20, 47:22, 48:8, 48:14, 49:13, 50:8, 50:11, 50:15, 50:17, 50:20, 51:8, 51:9, 51:13, 51:18, 51:22, 51:24, 52:23, 53:11, 53:23, 53:25, 54:3, 54:23, 55:2, 55:10, 55:13, 55:25, 56:5, 56:6, 56:18, 56:21, 56:24, 58:6, 59:24, 60:8, 60:19, 61:7, 61:21, 62:3, 62:4, 62:22, 63:11, 63:12, 63:16, 64:14, 64:25, 65:5, 65:20, 66:4, 66:12, 66:15, 66:20, 67:4, 68:12, 68:14, 69:15, 70:3, $70: 8,70: 22,71: 7,72: 16$, 73:7, 73:8, 73:9, 74:8, 74:11, 74:17, 74:18, 74:25, 75:2, 75:16, 75:22, 75:23, 75:25, 76:11, 76:13, 76:19, 76:24, 78:21, 78:24, 80:10, 80:14, 81:22, 82:7, 83:7, 83:13, 83:17, 84:9, 84:22, 85:5, 85:9, 85:21, 86:13, 86:24, 89:12, 90:10, 91:14, 91:24, 92:2, 93:1, 93:3,
93:16, 93:21, 93:23, 94:3, 94:23, 95:1, 95:3, 95:4, 95:15, 96:1, 96:11, 96:22, 97:15, 98:16, 99:2, 99:14, 100:9, 100:15, 100:20, 101:6, 101:9, 101:11, 102:3, 102:10, 102:14, 102:23, 102:24, 102:25, 103:2, 103:5, 103:6, 103:7, 103:16, 103:19, 103:24, 104:3, 104:7, 104:8, 104:14, 104:23, 105:2, 106:2, 106:23, 107:1,

107:5, 107:13, 107:14, 107:21, 110:3, 111:4, 111:11, 111:13, 111:18, 111:20, 111:21, 112:2, 112:18, 112:19, 112:22, 112:23, 113:1, 113:2, 113:14, 113:17, 113:20, 113:23, 114:19, 115:19, 117:4, 117:18, 117:22, 117:23, 118:2, 118:6, 118:14, 118:20, 119:1, 119:13, 120:1, 120:6, 120:11, 120:12, 120:22, 121:3, 121:6, 121:11, 121:21, 122:1, 122:10, 122:13, 122:18, 122:24, 123:22, 124:1, 124:5, 124:22, 125:8, 125:9, 126:2, 126:21, 127:10, 127:11, 128:6
for-profit [1] - 68:12
forced [2] - 41:2, 47:17
forces [1]-97:1
Fordham [1] - 104:11
forgot [1]-23:15
form [3]-24:12, 81:4, 101:4
format [2] - 15:9, 15:10
former [8] - 2:19, 15:1, 69:3, 75:2, 84:11, 99:18, 105:20, 105:21
forms [1] - 96:6
formulating [1] - 24:19
forth [1] - 37:23
fortunate [1] - 60:14
forum [2] - 85:25, 86:2
forums [1] - 86:3
forward [6] - 4:13, 30:25,
119:9, 119:14, 127:6,
127:13
fossil [1] - 20:8
fostering [2] - 77:23, 88:15
fought [3]-13:16, 35:12, 47:13
found [5] - 11:25, 22:17, 120:5, 123:21, 125:17
founded [1] - 86:24
founder [2] - 56:6, 77:1
founders [1] - 93:3
founding [2] - 41:4, 88:3
fountains [1] - 81:23
four $[7]-9: 14,10: 19,14: 5$, 22:9, 24:16, 47:1, 54:24
fraction [1]-34:12
fragmented [2] - 48:14, 48:17
frame [1] - 74:21
Francisco [1] - 44:24
Frank [2] - 90:15, 95:1
frankly [3] - 59:12, 60:8,
84:13
fraud [1] - 102:15
Frazier [4]-40:5, 45:17, 45:18, 45:23
FRAZIER [2] - 45:18, 45:21
free [3]-52:12, 74:6, 92:1
freelance [1]-40:14
frequently [2]-42:16, 81:7
friend $[1]$ - 66:15
friends [2] - 86:25, 107:14
from [84]-4:13, 5:23, 8:8,
8:9, 10:6, 14:5, 17:13,
21:8, 22:14, 23:8, 24:5,
25:19, 28:7, 28:18, 28:25,
30:22, 31:9, 31:10, 31:11, $35: 5,35: 24,36: 10,36: 22$,
36:23, 38:2, 38:21, 44:4,
47:7, 50:3, 50:6, 51:20,
53:21, 57:20, 58:22, 59:8, 62:12, 63:23, 64:8, 66:17, 67:2, 67:19, 70:20, 71:11, 72:6, 76:4, 77:14, 78:16,
78:18, 79:17, 80:25, 81:4, 82:2, 82:12, 84:10, 84:24, 86:11, 86:17, 87:20, 88:18, 88:19, 89:25, 92:6, 97:25, 98:15, 99:8, 99:20, 100:16, 103:22, 109:24, 113:20, 115:3, 115:24, 118:11, 119:24, 120:9, 122:22, 124:9, 125:18, 125:19, 127:1, 127:8, 127:12
front [2] - 60:8, 101:4
front-line $[1]$ - 60:8
fruition [1] - 82:14
frustrating [2]-15:2, 64:10
frustration [1]-60:4
fuels [1] - 20:8
full $[9]-11: 24,31: 4,32: 10$,
35:7, 35:19, 35:23, 35:25,
47:16, 93:18
full-time [1] - 93:18
fullest $[1]$ - 62:21
fully $[4]-47: 20,48: 2,52: 8$, 91:9
function [3]-41:18, 111:9, 111:15
functioned [1] - 108:6
functions [8]-49:2, 49:14,
53:6, 53:19, 54:5, 54:10,
54:16, 70:14
fund [5] - 41:1, 41:19, 41:22,
41:25, 76:1
Fund [1] - 2:21
fundamental $[3]-11: 7,69: 5$, 117:25
fundamentally $[1]$ - 15:14
funded [4]-40:24, 43:11, 43:18, 126:2
funding [1] - 41:24
fundraiser [1] - 102:7
funds [16] - 41:20, 50:3, 50:11, 75:23, 83:2, 84:22, 91:1, 91:3, 91:9, 91:14, 92:22, 116:18, 124:15, $125: 14,125: 18,126: 13$ further $[7]-60: 25,70: 8$, 76:18, 94:17, 118:8, 127:13, 128:10
furthermore [1] - 79:10
future [2] - 13:12, 79:7

| G |
| :---: |
| ```gain [1] - 82:10 Gale [2]-13:14, 14:4 game [3] - 5:24, 23:22, 96:5 gap [2] - 91:8, 91:10 Gardens [1] - 102:22 Garner [1] - 10:19 gather [1]-81:15 gave [2] - 58:21, 101:16 gender [2] - 2:17, 97:23 gender-based [1] - 97:23 general [7]-16:10, 43:8, 44:11, 59:9, 109:18, 110:5 General [3] - 69:3, 101:18, 105:20 generally [3] - 26:24, 53:22,``` |

generally [3]-26:24, 53:22, 68:12
generation [1] - 89:19
geographic [2]-25:10, 116:8
geographical [1] - 24:21
geographically [1] - 115:15
get [35]-5:20, 17:11, 26:1, 26:19, 27:24, 28:15, 29:12, 31:12, 32:18, 32:21, 35:19,
36:2, 37:23, 39:8, 39:17, 39:18, 39:24, 44:17, 50:19, 61:2, 65:9, 65:20, 66:10, 66:20, 67:16, 68:23, 71:22, 88:6, 88:9, 100:9, 102:19, 103:22, 108:10, 109:19, 124:15
gets [3] - 38:5, 81:6, 94:7
getting [6] - 32:12, 32:19,
34:6, 38:12, 95:9, 97:16
giant [1] - 107:1
give [17]-17:21, 17:22, 25:5, 29:1, 29:2, 38:17, 38:24, 38:25, 45:9, 48:1, 54:22, 62:21, 64:13, 86:8, 96:23, 110:10, 113:6
given [7] - 30:15, 30:17,
33:3, 55:2, 59:14, 69:17, 103:19
gives [6] - 36:8, 69:6, 83:9, 110:18, 110:24, 122:12
giving [6] - 52:19, 66:11,
83:1, 93:1, 116:4, 122:18
go [27] - 14:14, 28:12, 32:5, 37:5, 38:2, 39:2, 55:1, 59:11, 60:18, 60:23, 67:10, 69:18, 71:2, 72:9, 73:12, 76:21, 81:8, 82:7, 88:19, 90:17, 94:3, 96:21, 97:2, 99:1, 114:10, 115:3, 123:23
goal [3] - 7:22, 8:12, 126:2
God [1] - 114:19
GODSIL [53] - 1:15, 2:1, 3:16, 4:19, 13:2, 16:13, $16: 15,17: 24,21: 11,24: 5$, 27:8, 30:21, 33:11, 34:19, 36:25, 39:21, 40:4, 42:6, 45:15, 45:17, 45:20, 48:4, 51:18, 54:18, 55:24, 58:10, 61:24, 65:16, 66:5, 67:18, 70:7, 73:25, 76:20, 80:12, 83:14, 86:10, 89:25, 90:12, 92:24, 94:24, 98:14, 98:20,
101:13, 101:22, 104:2,
107:12, 114:21, 117:2,
119:16, 124:20, 127:7,
127:17, 127:19
Godsil [3]-2:11, 58:21, 62:2
goes [5] - 23:10, 59:20,
69:11, 73:21, 74:16
going [21] - 16:19, 17:19,
23:14, 28:12, 30:5, 30:6, $35: 19,36: 13,36: 14,37: 22$, 71:20, 95:14, 97:13, 102:7, 109:3, 109:13, 122:22,
123:22, 124:21, 127:13
golden [1] - 97:20
GOLDFEDER [10] - 104:3,
107:17, 107:25, 109:10,
111:14, 112:12, 113:11,
113:22, 114:12, 114:15
Goldfeder [2] - 98:25, 111:5
gone [2] - 58:4, 64:12
Gonzalez [2] - 90:15, 93:2
GONZALEZ [1] - 92:25
good [39] - 3:6, 3:20, 3:24, 4:2, 4:9, 4:16, 9:25, 13:10, 16:16, 18:2, 19:7, 21:14, 26:5, 27:13, 33:19, 34:22, 35:6, 37:2, 39:4, 42:10, 45:21, 48:6, 49:16, 54:12, 58:12, 62:1, 66:6, 74:8, 75:2, 76:22, 80:13, 83:15, 92:25, 94:25, 104:3,
107:24, 117:3, 127:14
Good [1] - 99:2
goodness [1] - 120:7
got [9] - 15:7, 16:24, 35:24, 36:19, 82:19, 102:4, 120:24, 123:9
governance [2] - 75:2,
115:12
government [25] - 3:10, 13:10, 13:21, 14:9, 19:1, 21:8, 22:7, 22:12, 33:19, 38:14, 62:22, 63:3, 75:14, 77:10, 77:18, 78:15, 79:18, 82:3, 88:5, 93:6, 93:7,
118:7, 121:9, 121:15,
122:14
Government [1] - 3:8
governor's [1] - 97:12
graduate [1] - 119:24
grain [1] - 118:8
grandparent [1] - 94:10
grant [2] - 40:14, 94:17
grants [3] - 65:24, 79:12
grassroots [3] - 26:1, 91:11,
96:16
grave [1] - 99:13
great [9] - 15:23, 16:4, 16:7, 21:16, 49:23, 66:13, 85:24, 95:13, 115:17
greater [3] - 118:5, 126:16, 126:19
greatest [1] - 23:2
greatly [2] - 51:3, 126:3
grew [2]-121:25, 122:2
ground [1] - 115:24
grounds [1] - 42:24
group [9] - 8:9, 13:11, 18:4,
42:13, 77:3, 85:12, 100:25,
104:18, 117:11
Group [4]-117:10, 117:15, 117:21, 119:11
groups [4]-6:15, 18:5, 36:10, 86:6
grow [1] - 89:18
growing [4] - 18:24, 20:21, 21:2, 44:3
growth [1] - 90:10
guess [2] - 33:9, 34:21
guidelines [1] - 21:25
Guidelines [1] - 2:20
guilty [2] - 10:15, 11:25
guys [2]-95:8, 97:8

## H

habits [3] - 81:5, 81:7, 81:8
had [26] - 16:20, 23:17,
23:20, 24:7, 25:7, 27:19,
31:1, 32:18, 34:9, 34:16,
35:7, 35:23, 36:10, 37:12,
50:22, 67:10, 89:24, 93:20,
94:3, 97:24, 101:25,
102:16, 102:21, 108:22,
110:4, 121:22
HAGEDORN [1] - 124:22
Hagedorn [2] - 114:22,
124:25
hail $[1]-62: 12$
half $[11]-23: 16,32: 25,33: 2$, 33:7, 33:10, 90:9, 91:17, 108:16, 108:20, 108:25, 124:8
Hall [3] - 44:1, 83:12, 101:16
hall [1] - 102:2
halls [1] - 82:3
ham [1] - 64:17
hand [2]-40:10, 128:14
handed [3]-12:13, 82:18, 105:5
handle [1] - 92:21
hands [2] - 11:1, 17:2
HANKS [1] - 40:12
Hanks [5] - 40:5, 40:6, 40:8, 40:10, 40:12
happen [8]-24:23, 31:13, 40:3, 71:15, 82:11, 86:1, 86:5, 123:13
happened [5]-16:20, 37:16, 86:3, 92:14, 123:15
happening [4] - 23:8, 35:18, 36:1, 123:14
happens [3]-17:5, 17:6, 25:12
happy $[4]-2: 2,3: 1,25: 15$, 76:17
hard [5] - 46:3, 58:19, 62:10, 66:20, 91:25
Harlem [1] - 45:25
Harpreet [2] - 114:22, 122:15
Harvard [1] - 75:3
has [62] - 4:21, 5:13, 5:14, 9:13, 12:10, 12:16, 14:13, 20:3, 23:19, 27:18, 27:21, 30:15, 38:20, 39:15, 42:24, 43:3, 44:7, 44:13, 44:24, 45:1, 45:5, 48:17, 54:13, 54:25, 55:12, 59:24, 60:25, 61:18, 64:16, 65:22, 66:24, 68:1, 70:2, 72:18, 73:5, 74:4, 74:24, 76:8, 77:7, 82:17, 84:9, 85:3, 85:16, 90:23, $90: 25,94: 15,96: 2$, 96:19, 99:16, 99:25, 100:8, 100:15, 105:15, 108:24, 109:7, 116:6, 118:5, 123:9, 125:5, 125:11, 127:2
hasn't [2]-94:13, 103:5
have [228]-2:8, 5:3, 5:4, 5:5, 6:7, 6:10, 6:11, 6:17, 6:21, 6:24, 7:8, 7:11, 7:17, 7:22, 7:23, 7:24, 8:3, 8:4, 8:16, 9:3, 9:4, 9:6, 9:7, 9:8, 9:11, 9:14, 9:19, 11:12, 12:11, 12:12, 13:6, 13:16, 13:25, 14:1, 14:22, 14:23, 16:9, 16:21, 17:4, 17:8, 17:11, 17:15, 18:10, 20:24, 21:19, 22:1, 22:4, 22:13, 22:16,

23:1, 23:14, 24:14, 26:22, 29:23, 30:1, 30:13, 30:23, 31:1, 31:21, 32:3, 32:23, 33:13, 33:14, 33:24, 34:7, 34:9, 34:22, 35:7, 35:16, 36:19, 36:20, 37:22, 37:24, 39:11, 39:20, 40:22, 41:17, 42:16, 42:18, 42:21, 43:17, 45:2, 47:13, 47:16, 48:9, 48:11, 49:23, 51:14, 51:17, 51:21, 53:11, 53:14, 53:20, 54:2, 54:3, 54:8, 54:15, 56:11, 56:13, 56:18, 56:23, 57:2, 57:4, 57:19, 58:3, 58:19, 60:1, 60:3, 60:15, 61:4, 62:16, 62:18, 64:12, 65:6, 65:10, 67:11, 68:7, 68:22, 71:13, 71:14, 71:15, 71:20, 72:23, 75:11, 75:24, 76:5, 76:6, 80:19, 83:11, 84:6, 84:11, 84:14, 84:15, 84:17, 84:19, 84:20, 84:22, 85:15, 85:25, 86:15, 86:25, 87:18, 87:24, 88:8, 88:23, 89:6, 89:13, 89:18, 89:24, 92:4, 92:9, 92:22, 93:8, 94:1, 94:8, 94:10, 94:16, 95:4, 95:20, 97:8, 97:18, 98:3, 98:4, 100:4, 100:22, 101:1, 101:3, 101:6, 102:7, 102:13, 102:25, 103:4, 103:18, 103:23, 104:5, 104:22, 105:5, 105:24, 106:5, 106:7, 106:15, 107:4, 107:9, 108:20, 110:4, 111:4, 111:20, 111:23, 112:4, 112:13, 112:14, 112:16, 114:13, 114:17, 114:23, 115:1, 116:4, 116:18, 117:22, 118:1, 119:15, 119:23, 120:20, 120:25, 121:3, 121:7, 121:19, 121:21, 122:5, 122:6, 122:13, 122:16, 122:19, 123:6, 124:10, 124:12, 125:10, 126:5, 126:12, 126:22, 126:25, 128:14
have you [3] - 68:20, 111:5, 111:8
haven't [5] - 2:9, 6:9, 10:22, 102:25, 125:22
having [11] - 17:10, 28:11, 34:1, 60:18, 71:6, 93:1, 107:14, 107:15, 108:18, 113:18, 127:13
He [1]-5:18
he [14]-66:15, 66:16, 73:6, 73:11, 82:21, 91:3, 91:5, 103:18, 123:9, 123:10,
$123: 16,126: 1$
he's [1] - 104:8
headlines [1]-13:1
heads [1] - 85:17
headsets [1]-7:12
healthy [1] - 52:16
hear [11]-5:23, 6:22, 9:13, 12:20, 21:23, 53:5, 75:10, 101:22, 115:2, 119:21, 127:12
heard $[14]-8: 12,24: 10$, 37:3, 42:21, 62:18, 62:25, 65:10, 74:14, 84:10, 93:7, 95:2, 95:13, 97:4, 99:10
hearing $[7]-4: 13,6: 7,7: 13$, 7:21, 8:15, 81:4, 123:22
HEARING [1] - 1:2
hearings [8] - 2:6, 7:1, 7:5, 7:17, 42:22, 62:5, 62:18, 98:4
Heather [1] - 80:17
heavy [1] - 59:4
held $[9]-5: 19,7: 19,10: 18$, 10:23, 12:1, 49:13, 54:13, 63:3, 99:17
hello [3] - 4:5, 40:12, 115:5 help [10]-26:11, 67:15, 67:17, 76:17, 78:2, 79:11, 79:25, 83:25, 88:14, 126:14
helped [2]-14:1, 27:23
helping [1] - 2:17
helplessness [1]-59:16
helps [1] - 26:6
her $[5]-30: 19,73: 22,82: 19$, 89:10
here $[41]-2: 5,3: 23,4: 20$, 5:1, 6:1, 7:22, 8:25, 10:7, 16:22, 18:4, 23:3, 24:11, 29:24, 38:4, 48:8, 50:22, 58:25, 59:12, 61:12, 62:3, 62:9, 83:20, 84:11, 93:10, 95:3, 96:20, 99:12, 104:8, 115:3, 117:9, 118:7, 120:10, 120:19, 120:20, 121:3, 122:21, 123:16, 123:25, 126:5, 127:10
hereby [1] - 128:7
hereunto [1] - 128:14
hi $[7]-13: 5,37: 1,90: 18$, 92:25, 101:14, 119:17, 124:22
Hidalgo [3]-9:21, 13:4, 13:5
HIDALGO [5] - 13:5, 16:14, 24:20, 25:14, 25:22
high [2] - 76:25, 119:24
higher [3]-28:23, 31:15, 34:23
highest [2] - $23: 2,38: 4$
highly [4]-15:5, 25:23,

105:25, 118:21
hill $[2]-31: 4,35: 13$
him [3]-102:2, 102:22, 103:9
hinder [1]-26:1
Hirsch [4]-56:2, 61:25, 62:5, 70:9
HIRSCH [5] - 62:1, 65:17, 67:24, 70:15, 72:21
his [10] - 73:6, 73:21, 91:3,
91:4, 103:17, 103:19,
103:20, 104:8, 126:1, 126:6
Hispanics [1] - 66:17
historic [1]-46:1
historically [2] - 68:1, 101:1
history [2] - 15:20, 87:14
hit [1] - 28:13
HO [10] - 1:17, 4:9, 24:7,
25:2, 25:17, 26:7, 113:12,
114:9, 114:14, 114:20
Ho [1] - 4:9
hold [5] - 10:25, 12:24, 19:22, 32:23, 69:7
holders [1] - 99:22
holding [5] - 2:6, 59:19,
62:4, 69:13, 101:21
Hollander [2] - 114:23, 117:6
HOLLANDER [1] - 117:3
Holts [1] - 9:24
Holtz [4]-9:3, 9:16, 9:18, 10:1
HOLTZ $_{[4]}-9: 25,11: 15$, 21:24, 22:16
Home [1] - 104:20
home [2]-21:1, 30:5
homeroom [1] - 89:9
homes [1] - 103:23
honest [2] - 87:25, 111:3
honestly [1] - 88:11
honor [3]-3:3, 13:6, 115:2
hook [1]-68:24
hope [6] - 36:22, 40:1, 57:3, 81:7, 86:7
hoping [1] - 26:8
horses [1] - 58:4
hospitals [1]-3:2
hot $[1]-87: 19$
hours [5] - 30:1, 59:15,
92:14, 96:11, 123:23
hours' [1]-96:11
House [1] - 75:3
house [1]-19:19
households [1] - 34:8
housing $[8]-2: 15,18: 16$,
19:4, 19:13, 19:16, 20:17, 78:11, 93:9
Housing [1] - 103:16
how [51] - 4:14, 5:5, 5:17,


into [16] - 25:7, 30:9, 49:6, 53:3, 78:3, 79:18, 81:18, 81:20, 82:3, 83:12, 91:18, 95:8, 107:7, 117:5, 123:7, 127:3
introduce [2] - 3:17, 70:25
introducing ${ }_{[2]}$ - 71:10, 72:3
introduction [1] - 126:7
invest [3] - 84:22, 85:22, 86:5
invested [5]-27:25, 76:6, 82:6, 82:13, 84:3
investigate [1] - 12:8
investigation [1] - 10:13
investigations [1]-11:24
investments [1] - 19:23
investors [1] - 19:9
invite [6] - 3:4, 40:4, 56:1, 74:2, 90:14, 98:23
invited [1]-6:8
invites [1] - 79:16
inviting [2]-3:12, 116:14
involve [1] - 66:16
involved [12]-5:20, 11:25, 12:5, 17:6, 66:10, 85:8, 85:10, 88:7, 88:9, 110:19, 110:20, 110:25
involves [1] - 79:13
irony [1] - 109:4
is [272]-2:5, 2:11, 2:15, 3:24, $4: 2,4: 5,4: 9,4: 11,4: 16$, 5:1, 5:6, 5:8, 5:11, 5:16, 5:18, 5:24, 6:2, 6:23, 7:10, 7:21, 7:22, 8:12, 10:1, 10:25, 11:9, 11:15, 11:20, 12:7, 12:19, 13:5, 15:2, 15:8, 16:2, 16:17, 17:5, 17:13, 17:20, 18:2, 21:1, 21:18, 21:20, 23:25, 25:3, 25:4, 26:16, 26:19, 27:17, 27:25, 28:2, 28:4, 28:15, 28:25, 29:7, 29:8, 29:10, 29:22, 30:11, 30:12, 30:24, 31:24, 32:2, 32:7, 32:13, 34:13, 35:4, 35:11, 35:12, 35:19, 35:21, 36:1, 38:3, 38:7, 38:14, 38:20, 39:1, 39:4, 42:3, 42:11, 42:12, 42:25, 43:3, 43:19, 43:22, 44:2, 44:18, 45:23, 47:9, 47:15, 48:7, 48:13, 49:11, 50:2, 50:4, 50:10, 50:17, 51:1, 51:4, 51:10, 51:21, 51:22, 52:15, 53:20, 55:5, 55:8, 55:10, 55:11, 55:14, 55:21, 56:7, 56:9, 56:10, 56:14, 56:19, 56:24, 57:3, 57:5, 57:10, 57:11, 57:17, 57:18, 57:22, 58:3, 58:6, 58:13, 58:14, 59:1, 59:8,

59:21, 59:24, 59:25, 60:11, 60:12, 61:12, 62:5, 62:7, 62:25, 63:1, 63:3, 63:6, 63:17, 63:18, 63:19, 64:9, 64:10, 65:19, 66:7, 66:23, 66:25, 67:1, 67:15, 68:12, 68:14, 68:19, 69:5, 69:9, 69:14, 69:16, 70:9, 70:24, 71:10, 71:18, 72:7, 73:3, 73:11, 74:9, 74:22, 75:7, 75:20, 76:18, 76:24, 77:12, 77:17, 77:20, 82:6, 82:23, 83:15, 86:4, 86:12, 86:16, 86:23, 87:5, 87:11, 87:23, 88:5, 89:10, 89:11, 89:23, 90:5, 91:13, 91:22, 92:21, 93:2, 93:13, 93:22, 94:6, 94:22, 95:1, 95:11, 95:24, 96:13, 96:18, 97:1, 97:8, 97:12, 97:13, 99:3, 99:6, 102:12, 102:20, 103:15, 103:20, 105:15, 107:8, 108:12, 108:15, 109:1, 109:6, 109:7, 109:8, 109:13, 109:15, 110:23, 111:5, 112:14, 112:18, 112:21, 112:24, 114:5, 114:6, 114:21, 115:5, 115:13, 117:6, 117:10, 117:24, 118:3, 118:7, 118:16, 118:19, 118:21, 118:25, 119:4, 119:11, 119:18, 119:22, 120:2, 120:7, 120:8, 120:16, 122:15, 123:10, 123:13, 123:17, 123:18, 123:20, 124:3, 124:6, 124:18, 124:24, 125:1, 125:3, 125:7, 125:23, 126:2, 126:10, 127:20, 128:8 is it your [1] - 113:15 is that $[10]-24: 20,35: 13$, 45:9, 51:22, 52:11, 55:6, 70:21, 114:2, 120:18, 124:9
is there [2] - 67:25, 127:15
Island [4]-4:4, 7:1, 25:1, 66:8
isn't [3] - 34:22, 90:19, 103:16
isolated [1] - 64:7
issue [19] - 4:21, 34:21, 51:1, 57:6, 59:12, 59:25, 60:7, 60:8, 60:10, 60:12, 61:19, 61:20, 67:25, 69:4, 85:18, 90:19, 92:13, 100:18 issue-based [1] - 57:6
issued [1] - 118:16
issues [14]-2:17, 5:3, 5:6, 23:5, 27:2, 52:7, 56:21,
57:14, 58:17, 59:22, 65:13,
$66: 12,79: 8,110: 21$
It $[2]-27: 25,79: 13$
it $[154]-6: 9,6: 16,9: 22,11: 4$,
$11: 14,11: 20,15: 22,15: 24$,
$16: 4,16: 6,17: 12,17: 19$,
$18: 5,21: 17,21: 20,22: 10$,
$22: 18,22: 25,23: 9,24: 13$,
$24: 20,26: 3,28: 8,28: 11$,
$31: 10,31: 15,31: 25,32: 8$,
$32: 12,32: 21,33: 9,33: 25$,
$35: 18,35: 22,36: 17,37: 17$,
$37: 24,38: 10,39: 12,39: 16$,
$40 \cdot 3,41: 17,43: 11,44: 2$ 40:3, 41:17, 43:11, 44:2, 44:7, 44:19, 44:24, 45:18, 49:14, 50:4, 50:24, 51:8, 51:15, 53:3, 53:4, 53:6, 53:10, 53:18, 54:9, 54:25, 55:5, 55:14, 56:14, 57:2, 57:3, 57:5, 57:9, 58:3, 65:19, 66:20, 69:8, 69:9, 69:21, 70:1, 75:4, 75:5, 76:15, 78:10, 79:16, 81:14, 83:9, 83:11, 83:12, 86:8, 86:24, 87:21, 88:10, 89:4, 89:5, 89:7, 93:11, 93:14, 93:22, 93:23, 94:6, 95:10, 95:24, 95:25, 96:1, 96:2, 96:13, 96:20, 96:25, 97:1, 97:24, 98:6, 98:8, 98:9, 98:11, 101:18, 101:22, 101:24, 104:7, 105:12, 108:4, 108:5, 109:21, 110:8, 110:15, 110:18, 110:23, 110:24, 111:18, 112:18, 114:4, 114:6, 114:19, 117:5, 117:25, 118:2, 118:13, 118:21, 119:14, 120:18, 120:22, 120:24, 122:9, 122:12, 122:16, 123:3, 123:6, 123:21, 123:22, 123:24, 124:8, 124:19, 126:14 it's [68] - 3:2, 3:15, 10:19, 11:11, 13:6, 15:3, 15:20, 15:21, 17:8, 17:20, 21:19, 23:12, 24:9, 24:15, 25:10, 27:12, 27:20, 27:21, 29:16, 32:24, 40:25, 44:25, 49:12, 49:13, 49:17, 49:18, 50:13, 52:19, 55:15, 57:25, 62:23, 68:4, 68:7, 71:7, 71:22, 72:5, 73:14, 75:1, 76:12, 84:10, 84:12, 85:24, 87:19, 87:21, 90:7, 90:20, 91:12, 91:25, 96:25, 105:18, $110: 6,110: 8,110: 9$, 111:15, 113:8, 113:23, 119:19, 119:20, 121:12, 122:16, 125:6, 125:8, 125:20, 125:25, 126:11,
127:10
It's $[1]-65: 20$
item $[1]-28: 14$
items $[2]-32: 14,35: 12$
its $[15]-6: 19,11: 1,15: 21$,
15:24, 18:23, 27:18, 44:19,
63:20, 74:21, 75:15, 105:5,
116:5, 117:20, 127:4
itself $[1]-60: 13$
ITT $[1]-102: 23$
IWANISZIW [2] - 18:2, 26:12
Iwanisziw $[3]-9: 20,18: 1$,
18:3

18:3

| J |
| :--- |
| Jackie $[4]-56: 1,58: 11$, |
| $58: 13,68: 14$ |
| Jay $[1]-117: 8$ |
| Jenny $[1]-90: 15$ |
| Jerry $[1]-98: 24$ |
| JHS $[1]-81: 2$ |
| Jimmy $[4]-66: 14,66: 21$, |
| $67: 8,67: 10$ |
| job $[9]-12: 19,26: 5,38: 13$, |
|  |

38:17, 38:25, 58:20, 63:10, 73:6, 122:5
JOHN [1] - 1:18
John [8] - 3:22, 21:14, 34:20, 35:6, 40:5, 42:7, 42:11, 117:8
join [4]-41:2, 47:18, 64:4, 106:6
joined [2]-13:13, 83:24
Josh [1] - 74:14
JOSHUA [2]-128:6, 128:19
Juanita [2] - 9:19, 16:17
judge [1] - 69:7
judges [3] - 103:12, 103:14, 103:21
judicial [2]-103:10, 111:21 June [5] - 7:19, 57:3, 98:4, 110:3, 126:18
jurisdiction [1] - 63:6
just [58] - 9:3, 14:14, 21:3, 23:10, 23:11, 23:12, 23:14, 24:7, 24:10, 24:15, 24:16, 24:21, 25:10, 25:17, 25:20, 27:16, 28:12, 29:23, 30:6, 30:14, 31:13, 32:25, 34:2, 34:15, 35:18, 39:11, 39:15, 40:2, 41:3, 43:20, 50:18, 51:1, 52:14, 55:8, 58:1, 59:15, 59:21, 61:4, 68:8, 71:24, 74:19, 76:21, 85:10, 90:18, 92:23, 97:22, 98:8, 101:3, 101:20, 107:23, 110:9, 111:3, 113:8, 113:12, 115:3, 120:10, 121:12, 126:25

| $\begin{aligned} & \text { justice }[6]-2: 22,11: 10, \\ & 11: 15,18: 9,21: 5,112: 1 \\ & \text { Justice }[5]-4: 7,9: 19,16: 18, \\ & 99: 5,117: 8 \\ & \text { justify }[1]-41: 24 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { Land }[1]-31: 23 \\ & \text { land }[6]-2: 14,18: 15,19: 4, \\ & 19: 16,31: 21,93: 9 \\ & \text { Lander }[1]-86: 24 \\ & \text { Lander's }[1]-120: 5 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { least }[12]-15: 24,22: 1,30: 8 \text {, } \\ & \text { 49:4, } 54: 11,75: 17,97: 16, \\ & 98: 4,106: 9,109: 21, \\ & 110: 16,110: 24 \\ & \text { leave }[13]-30: 14,93: 11, \\ & 93: 12,93: 13,93: 14,93: 17, \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 90: 18,91: 16,94: 4,94: 10, \\ & 97: 16,98: 19,98: 23, \\ & 102: 19,115: 7,115: 10, \\ & 118: 10,119: 21,119: 23, \\ & 120: 7,120: 23,121: 4, \end{aligned}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| K |  |  |  |
| ```Kallos [6] - 27:10, 27:14, 50:1, 91:2, 96:18, 126:6 KALLOS [9] - 27:12, 27:15, 31:4, 33:17, 35:6, 37:2, 37:7, 39:8, 39:23 Katherine [2] - 74:3, 83:16 keep [1] - 62:10 Kew [1] - 102:22 key [1]-20:18 kids [2] - 104:1, 121:24 killed [2] - 10:20, 10:21 killing [1] - 10:22 kind [19] - 14:20, 15:2, 22:19, 34:21, 37:25, 59:6, 68:7, 72:11, 73:20, 84:4, 95:3, 110:17, 117:22, 118:25, 119:8, 121:7, 122:6, 122:7, 123:11 kinds [1] - 110:22 knock [1] - 71:3 knocking [2] - 64:14, 66:11 know [51] - 4:20, 5:15, 7:24, 9:4, 10:11, 11:1, 16:24, 22:22, 26:3, 33:17, 37:13, 48:16, 53:5, 55:9, 55:11, 55:17, 57:25, 58:24, 67:16, 68:4, 68:6, 68:20, 69:2, 69:22, 70:16, 70:19, 71:6, 71:7, 71:19, 71:23, 72:23, 72:24, 74:23, 90:22, 95:20, 95:22, 96:5, 97:4, 101:2, 109:4, 109:13, 111:6, 113:6, 118:4, 119:11, 122:19, 124:6, 124:18, 124:23, 126:6, 127:2 knowing [1] - 23:8 knowledge [1] - 3:14 known [2] - 50:14, 78:19 knows [1] - 95:7 KOMATSA [2] - 101:14, 101:24 Komatsa [2] - 98:24, 101:14 Kyle [1] - 3:20 KYLE [1] - 1:16``` <br> L <br> lack [3]-90:20, 121:12, 121:13 <br> lacking [2] - 88:2, 89:22 <br> Lamorte [2] - 114:24, 115:6 LAMORTE [1] - 115:5 | ```large [6] - 28:5, 28:12, 35:3, 50:7, 50:18, 56:8 larger [4]-28:24, 34:7, 36:20, 85:12 Larian [2] - 3:4, 3:6 LARIAN [1] - 1:15 last [25]-2:5, 9:21, 13:15, 23:2, 25:17, 30:8, 36:25, 39:25, 53:9, 57:20, 59:15, 67:7, 77:16, 80:21, 81:5, 81:8, 83:23, 90:25, 92:13, 102:14, 104:21, 110:5, 123:3, 123:23 lastly [7] - 15:25, 50:22, 51:6, 75:9, 76:10, 92:16, 97:19 Iater [2] - 112:6, 114:4 Latino [2] - 46:24, 46:25 launch [2] - 80:1, 100:11 launching [1] - 75:20 Law [6] - 4:7, 4:18, 23:7, 104:11, 104:12, 104:20 law [19]-2:13, 4:17, 11:16, 13:15, 33:9, 39:2, 55:17, 55:21, 55:22, 64:17, 69:14, 99:17, 104:11, 111:7, 112:6, 113:3, 114:5 laws [15] - 13:25, 46:13, 48:20, 63:6, 63:13, 65:25, 66:2, 66:19, 67:6, 67:21, 67:22, 73:19, 110:17, 125:3 lawsuit [1] - 51:11 lawyer [3] - 3:22, 39:1, 107:17 lawyers [1] - 96:4 lead [4] - 47:20, 63:3, 92:4, 93:7 leader [4] - 45:24, 46:5, 57:11, 111:22 leaders [2]-12:21, 85:20 leadership [1] - 92:3 leading [1] - 58:23 leads [1] - 111:2 League [1] - 77:2 learn [4]-82:8, 82:9, 88:3, 88:4 learned [1] - 119:20 Learner [1] - 74:14 learning [1]-20:22 lease [1] - 102:9 leases [1] - 102:11``` | ```leaves [1] - 73:6 lectured [1] - 104:22 led [5] - 18:15, 20:15, 27:3, 77:3, 104:17 left [1] - 102:5 legal [3]-42:23, 99:4, 99:10 Legal [1] - 2:21 legalized [1] - 125:5 legally \({ }_{[2]}\) - 44:3, 55:21 legislation [2] - 15:7, 21:24 legislative [5] - 22:17, 25:14, 27:23, 68:22, 69:11 legislatively [1] - 100:23 legislature [4]-29:9, 29:21, 38:10, 60:19 less [14]-15:21, 28:23, 34:9, 35:16, 35:18, 46:11, 53:4, 56:13, 65:6, 90:23, 91:15, 108:19, 121:2, 122:13 lessons [1] - 82:8 let \([9]-9: 4,17: 2,43: 6,44: 9\), 46:18, 61:4, 73:23, 101:15, 108:10 let's [6] - 39:15, 40:2, 43:20, 56:14, 61:2, 114:6 level [14] - 45:12, 53:16, 59:19, 60:4, 75:19, 84:16, 85:1, 87:4, 88:10, 90:11, 96:20, 98:7, 115:24, 118:9 levels [2] - 42:15, 69:17 Levin [1] - 101:17 liability [2] - 51:4, 55:9 liaison [1] - 116:2 LIBRARY [1] - 1:3 Library [1] - 3:12 life [3] - 3:9, 30:19, 124:2 lifelong [1] - 40:15 lifers [1] - 78:4 lifetime [3] - 29:16, 81:5, 81:8 lifetimes [1] - 56:12 lift [2] - 59:4, 85:17 like [67] - 3:11, 3:17, 7:13, 7:22, 8:22, 8:25, 9:7, 9:22, 10:15, 15:3, 21:12, 22:19, 24:13, 24:24, 27:23, 29:5, 30:24, 31:19, 32:8, 36:3, 39:1, 40:4, 42:17, 49:1, 53:16, 54:3, 56:1, 58:3, 66:11, 66:16, 71:8, 71:22, 74:2, 74:5, 76:4, 76:6, 87:16, 87:18, \(90: 11,90: 14\),``` | ```likely [2] - 57:22, 101:7 limit [13]-14:16, 28:19, 28:20, 30:3, 32:10, 32:15, 33:14, 35:1, 35:21, 37:5, 63:21, 71:11, 73:2 limitations [1] - 82:8 limited [1] - 51:3 limiting [1] - 63:22 limits [12] - 25:19, 26:1, 28:25, 29:16, 32:15, 33:22, 34:23, 37:25, 91:24, 92:2, 106:1, 108:22 line [3] - 60:8, 67:25, 76:21 lines [3] - 50:9, 57:15, 101:4 linguistic [1] - 123:20 linguistically [2] - 123:24, 123:25 linguistics [1] - 117:7 links [1] - 115:22 listed [1] - 113:9 listen [5]-5:1, 5:2, 7:13, 8:3, 97:11 listening [5] - 7:9, 58:21, 98:21, 122:19, 122:21 literacy [2] - 14:10, 15:12 literally [6] - 31:13, 34:4, 123:5, 123:8, 124:10, 124:13 litigation [1] - 103:1 little [9] - 16:24, 26:9, 43:7, 57:25, 61:3, 70:10, 74:19, 88:9, 121:19 live [11] - 6:23, 29:21, 29:23, 36:3, 36:5, 40:12, 43:24, 62:17, 85:6, 102:3, 122:3 lived [1] - 84:1 lives [3] - 13:17, 85:7, 102:10 living [5] - 40:13, 45:24, 62:8, 116:11, 121:21 LLC [4] - 54:21, 55:9, 55:10, 55:12 loans [1] - 19:22 lobbying [6] - 48:16, 48:19, 49:4, 49:10, 54:1, 54:11 lobbyists [2] - 35:15, 50:25 local [11] - 45:6, 62:6, 79:6, 80:7, 84:17, 85:4, 85:9, 85:19, 99:17, 119:7, 119:12 Local [1] - 3:8 localities [1] - 54:15 locality [1] - 48:17``` |



needed [2] - 31:14, 49:18
needs [9]-16:3, 16:6, 62:23, 75:14, 76:3, 91:20, 94:21, 114:1, 115:19
negative ${ }_{[2]}$ - 56:17, 56:25 neighborhood [5] - 10:7, 31:12, 43:24, 66:10, 119:3 neighborhoods [6] - 20:5, 21:6, 83:3, 115:16, 116:14, 119:2
neighbors [1] - 79:19
never [7]-3:1, 23:16, 23:20, 37:23, 53:11, 84:15, 103:18
new [13]-13:24, 53:3, 66:3, 79:2, 79:5, 80:1, 81:15, 82:18, 96:3, 100:9, 100:18, 115:20, 126:14
NEW ${ }_{[3]}$ - 1:3, 128:3, 128:4
New [128] - 1:4, 2:24, 3:11,
4:15, 4:18, 4:25, 5:5, 6:11, 6:12, 10:6, 12:23, 13:7, 13:20, 16:18, 18:3, 18:5, 18:7, 18:21, 18:23, 19:8, 19:14, 19:21, 19:23, 20:3, 20:5, 20:19, 20:23, 20:25, 21:5, 24:25, 26:18, 27:19, 28:15, 29:15, 29:20, 31:24, 40:20, 41:8, 42:1, 43:5, 43:19, 43:21, 43:24, 44:3, 44:18, 44:24, 46:5, 46:6, 46:7, 46:14, 46:18, 46:19, 46:20, 47:4, 48:1, 48:14, 49:9, 49:19, 56:13, 57:10, 60:1, 60:13, 60:14, 61:4, 61:16, 62:20, 64:25, 66:13, 72:23, 73:17, 73:19, 74:12, 75:4, 77:8, 77:13, 78:1, 78:9, 79:19, 80:8, 83:25, 84:1, 84:8, 84:16, 84:18, 87:25, 95:24, 96:21, 96:23, 97:19, 97:24, 98:10, 99:12, 100:8, 100:12, 100:17, 101:3, 103:15, 104:6, 104:13, 104:19, 105:2, 105:11, 105:13, 105:15, 105:20, 105:21, 106:6, 106:8, 106:14, 106:20, 107:2, 113:16, 113:18, 113:24, 114:16, 115:10, 115:13, 121:21, 122:3, 125:1, 125:11, 125:16, 125:21, 126:12, 127:4, 128:7
news [5] - 6:12, 6:13, 80:5, 102:13, 102:14
News [1] - 10:13
newspapers [1] - 6:14
next [12]-7:16, 16:11, 30:10, 38:13, 38:16, 57:17, 57:22,

64:9, 106:4, 111:2, 112:23, 127:3
nice [1] - 30:21
night [3]-39:3, 102:8, 120:20
nine [2] - 13:24, 43:23
Ninety [1]-43:21
Nixon [1] - 97:13
no [33]-8:14, 11:13, 12:2, 15:4, 17:11, 23:10, 28:2, 29:23, 32:7, 32:8, 39:15, 40:18, 41:2, 41:4, 46:11, 47:17, 48:16, 52:8, 52:17, 67:25, 76:6, 86:20, 100:2, 102:18, 103:13, 104:1, 105:8, 106:11, 112:12, 113:22, 114:9, 128:12 nobody [3] - 23:18, 37:9, 108:3
Noel [3] - 9:21, 13:5, 13:6
nominating [3] - 44:8, 44:16, 65:19
nominee [1] - 43:1
nominees [2] - 41:16, 42:21
noncitizens [1] - 79:14
nonmember [1] - 72:20
nonmunicipal [1] - 113:4 nonparticipant [2] - 41:7, 42:14
nonpartisan [10]-42:16,
46:4, 47:22, 47:25, 52:5, 52:11, 52:18, 61:9, 83:4, 106:2
nonprofit [1] - 80:4
nonprofits [2] - 40:14, 85:10
nonproprietary [1] - 15:9
nonspeculative [1] - 18:16
North [1]-127:2
north [1] - 37:11
not [112]-10:17, 16:2, 17:8, 17:20, 20:25, 21:4, 21:18, 23:3, 23:12, 24:15, 25:4, 25:10, 25:16, 26:17, 28:3, 28:11, 30:8, 31:24, 32:11, 33:6, 33:18, 33:24, 37:10, 40:2, 40:21, 40:24, 41:12, 41:19, 43:22, 43:25, 44:8, 44:15, 45:4, 48:15, 49:19, 50:13, 50:19, 51:13, 53:23, 54:7, 55:15, 57:7, 57:12, 57:22, 58:3, 58:4, 58:25, 59:13, 61:16, 63:9, 67:15, 67:20, 68:8, 70:1, 70:19, 71:10, 71:12, 72:10, 78:18, 78:23, 78:25, 79:4, 79:14, 82:24, 83:10, 85:11, 86:23, 87:19, 91:10, 91:13, 91:14, 92:7, 92:12, 92:13, 94:1, 94:9, 95:6, 95:14, 95:25, 96:25, 97:1, 97:2, 101:22,

104:8, 105:15, 106:14, 106:15, 109:7, 109:8,
110:9, 110:12, 110:22, 111:7, 112:19, 113:7, 113:22, 115:14, 116:18, 117:21, 118:25, 122:17, 124:14, 124:15, 124:16, 124:17, 124:18, 124:19, 126:6, 128:10
not-profit [1] - 26:17
Notary [1] - 128:6
note [1] - 45:1
notes [2] - 126:25, 128:9
nothing [4]-32:12, 43:4, 88:4, 96:3
notice $[4]-6: 6,24: 11,25: 18$
noticed [1] - 9:6
notices [2] - 6:8, 6:11
notion [1] - 95:23
November [4] - 5:11, 40:2, 43:23, 43:25
now [28]-7:20, 11:17, 16:11, 17:8, 19:11, 19:25, 20:3, 26:16, 29:17, 31:22, 32:23, 47:15, 56:10, 56:13, 64:6, 68:19, 71:5, 89:22, 97:12, 100:12, 103:24, 110:2, 112:21, 114:5, 119:24,
120:9, 121:8, 123:10
nowhere [1]-43:16
number $[18]-7: 17,14: 13$, 14:23, 27:17, 30:23, 32:13, 35:3, 44:3, 90:9, 95:21, 99:15, 100:24, 101:8, 104:21, 118:12, 123:20, 124:6, 126:21
numbers [2]-34:15, 123:18
numerically $[1]-24: 15$
NYC $[3]$ - 1:1, 10:2, 13:9
nyc.gov/charter [2]-6:9, 6:24
nyccharter [1] - 6:18
NYPD [5] - 10:12, 10:14, 16:19, 17:5, 17:6
NYU ${ }_{[1]}-4: 7$

## 0

obstacles [1] - 117:12
obviously [6] - 55:1, 73:1,
74:5, 94:14, 125:8, 125:20
OCA [1] - 102:16
occasion [1] - 112:5
of [594]-2:6, 2:7, 2:12, 2:14, 2:16, 2:17, 2:19, 2:20, 3:3, 3:8, 3:9, 3:10, 3:18, 3:21, 4:1, 4:3, 4:7, 4:8, 4:10, $4: 20,4: 24,5: 6,5: 8,5: 13$, 5:15, 5:19, 5:23, 5:24, 6:5, 6:11, 6:24, 7:2, 7:4, 7:17,

8:1, 8:11, 8:16, 8:18, 9:9, 9:10, 9:14, 9:22, 10:4, 10:6, 10:11, 10:14, 10:15, 11:1, 11:4, 11:8, 11:16, 11:23, 11:25, 12:2, 12:9, 12:14, 12:15, 12:17, 12:20, 12:23, 13:9, 13:11, 13:12, 14:9, 14:13, 14:14, 14:19, 14:21, 14:23, 15:1, 15:2, 15:7, 15:10, 15:13, 15:14, 16:10, 16:19, 17:1, 17:2, 17:11, 18:3, 18:6, 18:7, 18:20, 19:16, 19:18, 19:21, 20:4, 20:6, 20:14, 20:19, 20:20, 20:21, 21:15, 21:17, 21:19, 22:1, 22:4, 22:7, 22:12, 22:18, 22:19, 22:20, 22:24, 24:1, 24:10, 24:11, 24:18, 24:22, 24:24, 24:25, 25:2, 25:3, 25:6, 25:10, 25:11, 25:22, 26:3, 26:9, 26:14, 26:15, 27:2, 27:5, 28:15, 28:18, 28:19, 28:23, 29:1, 29:6, 29:24, 29:25, 30:13, 30:15, 30:19, 30:23, 30:24, 30:25, 31:7, 31:8, 31:14, 31:16, 31:19, 31:21, 32:14, 32:16, 33:17, 33:22, 34:3, 34:4, 34:7, 34:12, 34:13, 34:22, 35:2, 35:3, 35:11, 35:18, 36:4, 36:10, 36:16, 36:17, 36:20, 36:24, 37:10, 37:11, 37:25, 38:18, 39:9, 39:10, 39:12, 39:16, 40:16, 40:23, 41:4, 41:8, 41:10, 41:11, 41:13, 42:12, 42:14, 42:16, 42:20, 42:25, 43:21, 43:23, 44:3, 44:6, 44:10, 44:21, 44:22, 45:5, 46:4, 46:6, 46:8, 46:10, $46: 15,46: 16,46: 20,46: 21$, 46:22, 46:23, 46:24, 47:1, 47:2, 47:8, 47:10, 48:16, 48:19, 48:23, 49:1, 49:5, 49:6, 49:8, 49:14, 50:6, 50:8, 50:16, 51:3, 51:13, 52:3, 52:14, 52:21, 52:22, 53:7, 53:10, 53:16, 53:18, 53:20, 53:23, 54:4, 54:5, 54:15, 55:4, 55:11, 55:18, 56:6, 56:8, 56:10, 56:11, 56:13, 56:21, 56:25, 57:2, 57:7, 57:9, 57:12, 57:24, 58:9, 58:13, 58:22, 58:23, 59:4, 59:5, 59:6, 59:16, 59:17, 59:20, 59:22, 59:25, 60:1, 60:4, 60:7, 60:14, 61:2, 61:4, 61:9, 61:15, 61:18, 61:20, 62:6, 62:7, 62:13, 62:20, 62:23, 62:24, 63:14, 63:22, 65:3, 65:12,


107:9, 109:18, 109:24, 110:20, 110:22, 111:6, 111:16, 111:21, 111:22, 112:2, 112:6, 114:14, 116:11, 116:19, 116:22, 124:4, 128:11
order [9]-2:2, 8:3, 8:16, 9:4, 47:18, 62:22, 71:21, 96:6, 106:16
organization $[11]-8: 8,8: 10$, 13:10, 38:17, 52:22, 58:15, 68:6, 76:16, 93:4, 99:6, 125:2
organizations [10] - 8:18, 10:4, 36:17, 52:2, 52:21, 68:23, 80:4, 117:16, 119:12
organize [5] - 41:14, 52:6, 63:17, 70:19, $99: 9$
organized [3]-66:22, 77:3, 77:7
organizer [2] - 40:15, 73:6
organizing [2] - 10:7, 78:21
oriented [1] - 22:6
orienting [1] - 50:5
originally [1] - 59:13
other [54]-3:17, 7:8, 16:23,
17:14, 18:17, 22:7, 22:9, 22:12, 24:5, 26:21, 27:13, 31:6, 32:14, 33:12, 33:19, 34:17, 35:8, 37:17, 37:18, 37:24, 44:25, 45:10, 48:16, 49:8, 51:16, 52:22, 54:9, 54:14, 54:18, 55:24, 56:20, 64:12, 64:23, 66:20, 66:22, 70:4, 77:6, 79:16, 85:19, 86:3, 88:22, 91:13, 92:3, 92:7, 95:15, 100:5, 100:12, 113:7, 119:2, 124:8, 126:23
others [2]-40:24, 100:21
otherwise [1]-79:17
ought [2]-5:19, 105:1
our [91] - 3:4, 4:11, 5:1, 5:19,
6:24, 6:25, 7:4, 7:5, 10:24, 11:20, 12:5, 12:14, 13:15, 13:20, 14:3, 14:5, 14:7, 15:14, 19:5, 25:14, 31:18, 41:4, 41:19, 41:21, 46:11, 47:21, 48:12, 49:25, 50:9, 56:7, 56:12, 62:6, 62:9, 62:12, 62:14, 62:19, 62:20, 63:1, 63:9, 63:11, 64:3, 64:6, 64:10, 64:19, 66:15, 70:22, 71:9, 71:13, 71:25, 72:1, 72:7, 73:3, 73:15, 74:14, 76:9, 76:16, 77:9, 77:22, 78:4, 78:6, 78:13, 78:19, 79:6, 79:24, 80:23, 82:3, 83:12, 85:7, 85:10,

85:17, 85:19, 85:22, 89:13, 93:6, 93:13, 105:24, 106:21, 114:21, 115:2, 116:4, 116:10, 121:2, 121:9, 121:10, 125:2, 125:7, 126:2, 126:16 out [34] - 6:16, 11:4, 11:7, 12:13, 14:21, 15:23, 16:20, 16:22, 17:1, 17:10, 28:15, 31:17, 31:19, 32:20, 43:23, 49:5, 50:7, 53:9, 54:24, 60:23, 66:11, 68:23, 83:11, 86:14, 87:1, 87:17, 89:5, 95:3, 96:6, 99:18, 107:4, 115:9, 120:5, 123:21
outcome [3] - 47:10, 90:22, 128:12
outdated [1] - 46:15
outlet [1] - 6:12
outlets [2] - 6:13
outlier [1] - 44:18
outlined [2]-13:20, 13:23
outlines [1]-21:24
outraced [1] - 91:3
outreach [4]-6:4, 6:20, 53:13, 73:10
outside [3] - 2:10, 23:18, 33:7
outweigh [1] - 33:21
over [35] - 10:4, 10:6, 10:10, 13:15, 14:5, 14:14, 19:17, 22:2, 28:21, 29:25, 31:21, 32:3, 35:8, 36:1, 42:2, 46:7, 47:8, 59:14, 62:12, 65:6, 80:21, 82:15, 91:2, 91:4, 91:6, 91:17, 92:9, 93:17, 104:14, 104:21, 105:23, 123:16, 125:18, 125:19
overall [2] - 20:12, 80:6
overseas [3] - 51:10, 51:12, 51:14
oversee [1] - 49:10
overseeing [1] - 48:15
oversees [6] - 48:19, 48:20, 48:21, 48:22, 48:23, 49:14 oversight $[7]-24: 2,49: 5$, 54:11, 102:13, 102:18, 103:14, 104:1
overturn [1] - 12:2 own [10] - 43:14, 43:15, 52:14, 60:18, 72:7, 73:16, 73:22, 78:18, 117:20
owner [1]-55:11
owners [1]-51:3
ownership [1] - 54:21

| $\mathbf{P}$ |
| :--- |
| $\mathbf{P}_{[2]}-1: 10$ |

p.m [1] - 127:21
P.M [2] - 1:6, 2:4
paid [16] - 11:12, 36:2, 38:4,
64:14, 73:8, 93:11, 93:12, 93:16, 93:20, 93:21, 94:1,
94:2, 95:9, 100:14, 102:25, 103:5
pain [1]-17:16
pairing [1] - 45:11
panel [6]-9:10, 21:25, 61:8, 114:21, 114:24, 115:2
panels [4]-7:19, 9:7, 9:14, 22:4
panoply [1] - 108:23
paper [2]-14:15, 112:3
paperwork [1] - 96:12
paradigm [1] - 19:6
parent [1] - 55:10
parental ${ }_{[7]}$ - 93:12, 93:13, 93:16, 93:20, 93:21, 94:1, 94:3
parents [2] - 36:7, 78:13
Paris [2] - 76:6, 76:8
Park [1] - 88:19
part [15] - 3:3, 25:2, 35:11,
59:16, 68:5, 80:3, 82:16, 85:15, 86:19, 87:5, 89:15, 94:5, 119:9, 120:2, 122:14
participant [1] - 40:20
participants [1] - 72:20
participate $[8]-7: 11,29: 7$,
42:20, 44:17, 48:2, 71:3,
124:3, 124:17
participated [1] - 104:16
participating [7] - 27:6, 44:4,
52:9, 82:24, 83:22, 90:3, 90:6
participation [16] - 14:12,
16:1, 63:1, 63:7, 64:11,
65:3, 74:23, 74:24, 80:6, 80:24, 84:5, 108:24, 109:3, 109:8, 123:20, 124:18
Participatory [4]-74:10, 77:2, 80:19, 86:22
participatory [18]-13:22, 76:7, 77:4, 80:16, 80:20, 81:5, 81:11, 82:1, 82:4, 82:16, 83:1, 83:9, 83:17, 87:17, 88:6, 90:4, 120:3, 120:14
particular ${ }_{[10]}-5: 15,6: 13$, 24:17, 25:8, 35:10, 54:8, 74:17, 107:11, 108:6, 120:16
particularly [5] - 5:16, 23:6, 25:6, 65:5, 109:2
parties [20] - 41:14, 42:18, 43:1, 43:12, 43:17, 46:9, 52:4, 52:8, 52:12, 52:17, 52:21, 69:12, 105:19,

109:23, 110:4, 110:11, 111:17, 112:25, 128:11
partisan [1]-41:1
partly [1]-89:23
Party [1] - 111:22
party [17] - 41:3, 41:12,
42:21, 42:25, 43:2, 43:14,
46:9, 47:18, 52:2, 52:14,
56:15, 68:22, 106:16,
109:24, 110:17, 111:6,
111:10
party-raiding [1] - 110:17
pass [3] - 3:19, 46:4, 125:3
passed [1] - 15:7
passion [1] - 84:16
passionate [2]-66:9, 78:23
past $[7]-16: 22,18: 10,64: 3$,
74:11, 82:15, 90:7, 103:5
path [2]-120:9, 121:6
paved [1] - 124:14
pay [6] - 40:20, 40:25, 47:10,
73:15, 99:22, 102:10
paying [3]-35:22, 71:7, 102:23
PB [18] - 74:13, 74:18, 74:20,
74:22, 74:24, 75:3, 75:10,
75:18, 76:2, 76:5, 76:11,
77:6, 80:1, 83:19, 83:21,
84:18, 87:3, 87:8
PBNYC [4]-78:20, 79:11, 79:12, 80:1
PDFs [1] - 14:15
peers [3]-83:19, 85:19, 88:21
penalty [1]-11:3
Pennsylvania [1] - 104:12
people [100]-3:14, 5:1, 5:3, 5:5, 5:21, 5:25, 9:8, 17:3, 17:4, 17:16, 17:19, 17:21, 23:22, 25:25, 26:2, 27:5, 28:8, 29:11, 31:8, 31:9, 31:14, 32:1, 32:6, 32:21, 33:3, 33:6, 34:9, 34:10, 35:2, 35:14, 36:3, 36:10, 36:21, 36:23, 37:10, 37:22, 38:2, 38:5, 38:7, 39:16, 41:8, 53:14, 53:21, 60:9, 61:4, 62:23, 65:3, 65:8, 65:9, 67:2, 68:13, 75:9, 75:13, 75:24, 79:14, 82:17, 82:22, 85:8, 85:12, 87:16, 90:22, 91:20, 91:25, 93:20, 93:23, 93:24, 95:20, 96:1, 96:5, 96:14, 96:15, 97:2, 99:19, 100:3, 102:18, 103:3, 103:22, 105:10, 108:3, 108:16, 109:17, 109:19, 109:21, 110:2, 110:10, 110:11, 110:13, 110:18, 110:24, 121:2,

## 121:6, 121:12, 121:14, <br> 121:15, 122:10, 122:13, 122:21, 123:11, 123:25, 127:12

people's [2] - 13:17, 13:19 per [1]-8:5
percent [34]-11:4, 28:19, 30:11, 35:25, 39:13, 39:16, 43:21, 44:6, 46:20, 46:21, 46:22, 46:23, 46:24, 47:1, 47:2, 47:8, 50:3, 75:17, 77:14, 91:4, 91:6, 91:15, 92:10, 92:18, 92:19, 93:22, 103:12, 125:12, 125:17, 125:19, 125:21, 126:8
percentage [1] - 119:7
perfect [2]-28:2, 87:9
perfectly [2] - 23:22, 120:8
perhaps [3] - 27:22, 56:10, 109:20
period [3]-39:9, 108:21, 113:20
perjury [1] - 10:17
permit [3]-99:22, 100:16, 106:12
permits [8] - 99:15, 99:16, 99:25, 100:6, 100:14, 100:19, 100:24, 101:8
perms [1]-39:19
perpetuate [1] - 18:13
perpetuity [1] - 99:18
person [16] - 8:12, 17:3,
17:13, 22:11, 30:18, 36:11,
36:13, 36:20, 39:1, 65:1,
68:24, 86:18, 96:8, 112:21, 114:24
personal [4]-65:6, 66:15, 122:22, 126:25
personally [1] - 126:9
pertaining [2] - 48:11, 113:3
pertains [2]-48:24, 93:12
perverse [1] - 72:6
petition [4]-29:13, 69:22,
106:1, 119:8
petitions [1]-60:23
petrified [1]-31:16
phone [2]-64:15, 66:12
pick [1] - 58:1
piece $[4]-15: 7,29: 8,72: 24$, 73:1
pieces [1] - 112:3
pilot [2] - 80:2, 96:20
place [14] - 43:8, 49:13, 65:2,
65:25, 66:4, 70:4, 75:15,
86:4, 109:7, 118:6, 121:17,
123:2, 123:4, 123:14
Place [1] - 117:19
places [5]-33:19, 54:9, 54:10, 65:7, 117:13
placing [1] - 47:21
plan [2] - 25:4
planning [11] - 15:3, 31:22, 31:25, 59:13, 117:11, 117:13, 118:15, 118:16, 119:10, 119:13, 123:6 plans [3] - 117:14, 117:18, 123:25
plant [1]-122:1
platforms [1] - 77:7
play [4]-37:10, 101:20,
107:7, 116:17
played [1] - 25:7
playing [3] - 38:7, 45:12, 118:8
please [13]-2:9, 3:19, 8:1, 8:8, 9:20, 14:24, 34:5, 34:6, 40:11, 42:8, 56:3, 74:5, 127:12
plunge [1] - 108:15
pockets [1] - 117:20
point $[4]-23: 3,23: 25,34: 4$, 108:10
points [1] - 44:5
polarizing [1] - 56:11
police [15] - 10:10, 10:25, 11:8, 11:9, 12:4, 12:11,
12:14, 12:18, 12:21, 12:24,
22:20, 22:22, 23:9, 23:20,
24:24
policies [4] - 115:21, 115:25, 116:10, 116:13
policy [3] - 48:7, 56:21, 116:6
policy's [1] - 116:19
political [28] - 18:21, 24:1,
41:14, 42:18, 45:24, 47:18,
52:4, 52:8, 52:17, 52:21,
52:22, 57:15, 59:6, 59:20,
64:18, 66:17, 68:10, 69:1,
69:12, 73:9, 74:23, 90:8,
92:11, 106:16, 109:23,
110:12, 110:21, 119:1
Political [1] - 49:12
politically [1] - 119:4
politicized [2] - 25:23,
118:21
politics [7]-28:16, 56:11, 58:8, 67:3, 77:23, 125:6, 127:4
poll [2] - 46:12, 113:6
polling [2] - 65:2, 65:7
polls [1] - 106:19
pool [2] - 53:21, 68:9
poor [2] - 77:17, 92:5
population [1] - 76:9
populous [1] - 11:13
portion [1]-5:13
position [3]-21:18, 54:2, 103:19
positions [1] - 3:10
positive [2] - 107:21, 108:11
positively [1] - 79:23
possible [6] - 6:20, 7:5, 7:15,
9:5, 62:25, 118:14
post [2]-7:4, 71:16
posted [1] - 6:24
potential [2]-115:20, 115:25
potentially [2] - 80:1, 116:6
poverty [1] - 18:13
Powell [2]-74:4, 83:16
POWELL [1] - 83:15
power [9]-14:21, 28:7,
28:16, 31:21, 35:2, 69:1,
75:16, 122:1, 126:4
powerful [1] - 100:25
powers [1] - 15:24
practical [1] - 98:7
practice [2] - 22:25, 75:2
practices [2] - 13:22, 18:12
Practices [1] - 49:12
practicing [2] - 3:23, 39:2
practitioner [1] - 104:10
preceded [1] - 55:5
precedent [1] - 22:17
precedents [1] - 76:4
precisely [1] - 70:10
predicate [1] - 105:14
preempt [1] - 61:1
prefer [2] - 7:3, 36:5
preliminary [2]-44:8, 44:16
prepare [1] - 79:5
prepared [2] - 61:16, 61:21
present [3]-10:8, 60:22,
63:19
presented [4]-5:10, 61:11, 66:25, 93:8
President [3]-14:4, 29:1, 29:2
president [8]-4:3, 39:19, 42:12, 58:13, 62:6, 80:18, 118:22, 118:23
presidential [5] - 34:24,
42:15, 44:15, 46:2, 46:14
presidents [2]-15:15, 31:20
pressing [1] - 76:3
pressure [2]-24:1, 59:8
pretty [1] - 56:14
prevent [1] - 19:18
prevents [3]-23:8, 110:16, 118:2
previous [3] - 53:17, 100:22, 105:22
previously [4]-49:15, 50:1, 95:6, 102:17
price [2]-100:4, 100:16
Primaries [1] - 42:12
primaries [13]-40:21, 42:1, 44:15, 44:19, 46:10, 47:10, 47:11, 51:25, 52:2, 61:10,

106:13, 106:14
primarily [1] - 126:2
primary [26] - 41:1, 41:24,
42:14, 42:22, 42:25, 43:7, 43:19, 43:22, 44:7, 44:10,
44:13, 44:15, 47:8, 70:22,
70:23, 77:16, 106:17,
109:18, 110:3, 110:12,
110:14, 110:16, 111:18,
111:19, 111:20, 113:1
principal [2]-86:19, 87:15
principle [2] - 41:4, 41:6
principles [1] - 18:7
printed [1] - 113:9
prior [3]-61:8, 65:7, 113:15
prioritize [4]-19:12, 19:16, 19:20, 25:24
prioritizes [2] - 19:7, 79:21
priority [2] - 27:17, 125:8
private [3]-41:15, 41:18, 41:20
privilege [3]-14:16, 120:18, 120:22
pro [1]-108:24
pro-democracy [1] - 108:24
probably [4] - 32:5, 71:22, 71:24, 74:13
problem [5] - 32:2, 81:13, 118:4, 122:16, 125:23
problem-solving [1] - 81:13
problems [1] - 116:15
procedure [1] - 106:23
procedures [1] - 111:25
process [64] - 5:24, 11:24, 16:19, 18:18, 30:9, 31:21, 40:24, 41:22, 44:4, 48:2, 52:15, 60:13, 61:2, 63:1, 64:12, 64:18, 65:4, 65:19,
66:18, 67:17, 69:14, 69:22,
69:25, 70:3, 72:3, 72:8, 74:13, 75:10, 75:19, 76:14, $77: 5,77: 22,79: 11,79: 21$, 80:1, 81:20, 82:5, 82:17, 83:19, 84:6, 84:12, 84:19, 84:23, 84:24, 95:6, 97:17,
106:5, 107:9, 108:5,
117:11, 117:13, 117:22,
117:23, 118:12, 118:15,
118:16, 118:19, 118:20,
119:1, 119:10, 119:14, 120:2
processes [8] - 31:25, 43:14, 76:5, 78:20, 79:18, 80:8, 84:6, 120:4
processing [1] - 117:17
procurement [1] - 103:2
producing [1] - 13:24
profession [1] - 38:20
professor [4]-2:13, 4:17,
104:11, 117:6

| ```profit [3] - 19:17, 26:17, 68:12 program [5] - 4:6, 14:1, 66:3, 106:1, 126:9 programs [5] - 20:23, 65:25, 76:2, 80:2, 126:24 Progress [1] - 93:4 progressive [2] - 69:5, 127:4 prohibit [1] - 113:19 prohibition [1] - 23:7 Project [5] - 4:11, 18:4, 74:11, 99:4, 99:5 project [4]-74:11, 82:11, 82:12, 82:14 projects [6]-45:11, 75:22, 81:18, 82:7, 82:18, 84:18 prominent [1]-10:4 promises [1] - 57:21 promote [6] - 18:14, 52:7, 56:7, 63:7, 64:20, 117:20 promotes [1] - 85:3 prone [1] - 103:25 pronouncing [1] - 122:16 properly [1] - 96:7 property [2]-2:14, 62:8 proportional [3] - 97:25, 98:5, \(98: 9\) proposal [17]-21:16, 21:19, 23:4, 24:4, 24:8, 24:12, 24:19, 39:6, 41:7, 54:20, 74:16, 93:13, 96:18, 111:9, 113:13, 120:6, 120:13 proposals [7]-28:5, 30:24, 31:1, 54:3, 93:8, 104:23, 107:11 propose [3]-21:21, 25:18, 59:22 proposed [4]-54:24, 105:3, 106:3, 107:7 proposing [4]-22:8, 75:16, 94:12, 94:19 prosecute [1] - 12:8 prosecuting [1] - 12:10 Prosecution [1] - 11:6 prosecutor [2]-10:10, 11:19 prosecutor's [1] - 12:7 protect [3]-11:12, 17:17, 42:13 protected [1] - 17:18 protecting [1] - 27:25 protection [1] - 59:20 protocols [1] - 6:6 proud [1] - 2:20 proudly [1] - 62:13 prove [1] - 107:1 proven [2]-56:24, 74:22 provide [8]-8:19, 50:10, 99:10, 100:20, 101:9, 103:6, 106:9, 121:6 provided [3] - 55:14, 55:19,``` | ```125:13 provides [2]-88:10, 122:9 providing [2]-53:24, 102:13 provision [1] - 15:17 provisions [5]-14:2, 14:24, 55:18, 105:5, 116:23 PUBLIC [2]-1:2, 1:3 Public [4]-3:12, 15:19, 88:1, 128:6 public [51] - 2:6, 3:2, 6:6, \(7: 4,7: 18,7: 20,7: 21,19: 5\), 19:7, 19:16, 19:17, 19:19, 19:21, 19:22, 28:17, 28:18, 29:11, 31:5, 32:8, 35:19, 35:23, 39:18, 43:8, 43:10, 43:18, 50:3, 50:11, 59:17, 60:5, 76:23, 78:1, 78:10, 78:24, 81:22, 81:23, 88:11, 88:16, 91:3, 91:5, 91:14, 98:2, 108:22, 115:23, 116:2, 116:14, 116:16, 125:11, 125:13, 125:24, 126:3, 126:7 public's [3]-65:12, 116:1, 116:11 publicly [1] - 40:23 published [2] - 10:13, 13:19 punch [1] - 40:1 punched [1] - 102:4 purging [1] - 46:12 purpose [6] - 37:25, 42:25, 56:7, 109:11, 109:14, 109:15 purposes [2]-24:18, 113:21 pursuant [1] - 104:19 pursue [1] - 63:25 push [1] - 37:17 pushed [1]-42:16 pushes [1] - 83:12 put \([7]-25: 8,28: 11,51: 17\), 53:9, 54:24, 65:25, 95:8 puts [2] - 19:8, 36:17 putting [2] - 117:5, 120:8``` qualified $[1]-93: 21$ qualify $[3]-29: 11,93: 16$, $93: 23$ quality $[2]-76: 12,126: 22$ quantify $[1]-71: 14$ quarter $[1]-76: 8$ Queens $[6]-40: 13,40: 16$, $66: 8,66: 17,124: 12$ question $[27]-8: 21,21: 20$, $23: 22,25: 3,25: 15,25: 17$, $33: 13,36: 25,52: 23,61: 7$, $61: 9,68: 14,70: 8,86: 12$, $86: 16,87: 6,88: 24,90: 5$, $98: 15,98: 19,102: 12$, | 105:14, 108:12, 109:1, <br> 109:11, 111:4, 113:12 <br> questions [25] - $5: 19,8: 7$, <br> 9:10, 9:12, 9:13, 21:13, <br> $21: 17,24: 5,24: 7,27: 8$, <br> $30: 22,33: 12,51: 20,51: 21$, <br> $54: 18,55: 24,67: 19,70: 7$, <br> $73: 25,86: 11,89: 25,98: 21$, <br> 107:8, 107:12, 127:8 <br> quick [1] - 113:12 <br> quickly $[5]-21: 16,35: 20$, <br> 91:16, 101:24, 116:1 <br> quite $[1]-104: 14$ <br> quo $[1]-59: 6$ <br> quorum $[1]-22: 1$ <br>  <br>  | ```really [43]-3:2, 5:4, 5:25, 12:25, 18:19, 22:10, 22:21, 22:22, 24:24, 25:24, 26:1, 26:20, 29:5, 34:22, 35:19, 49:18, 50:13, 54:22, 58:6, 68:5, 69:16, 71:16, 84:3, 85:8, 85:24, 86:4, 86:7, 87:24, 89:18, 94:13, 95:22, 97:20, 98:12, 107:19, 113:12, 120:12, 120:16, 121:18, 122:8, 124:7, 125:15 reason [6] - 25:2, 34:22, 69:9, 113:23, 119:22, 124:17 reasons [2]-75:16, 95:17 Rebecca [2] - 114:24, 115:5 recall [10] - 59:25, 60:2, 60:7, 60:12, 68:16, 69:4, 69:5, 69:15, 69:20, 69:25 receive [1]-91:5 recently [3] - 10:13, 66:1, 66:4 recognition [1] - 59:3 recognized [1] - 75:1 recommend [7] - 6:18, 15:5, 30:6, 30:9, 64:25, 92:17, 99:12 recommendation [7] - 45:9, 48:10, 48:12, 49:25, 50:10, 64:19, 68:16 recommendations [9]-5:9, 5:10, 11:2, 11:5, 11:23, 14:13, 48:9, 50:23, 54:25 recommending [1] - 29:3 Record [1] - 6:7 record [2] - 15:8, 74:22 recorded [1] - 102:2 recruit [2] - 52:6, 71:1 redefine [1] - 78:2 redistricting [7] - 25:4, 39:10, 39:14, 123:2, 123:4, 123:18, 124:9 redline [1]-20:5 reduce [2] - 11:3, 35:1 reduced [2]-11:7, 106:1 reduces [1] - 70:13 reducing [1] - 126:3 reelection [2]-34:11, 91:6 refer [1]-54:6 reference [1] - 15:6 referenced [1] - 24:21 referendum [2]-60:16, 60:21 refill [1] - 81:24 reflect [1] - 117:14 reform [9]-11:17, 27:18, 29:10, 48:10, 48:13, 59:24, 69:6, 125:8, 126:19 reformers [1] - 45:6``` |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |

```
reforms [9] - 44:21, 45:10
    105:16, 106:25, 107:7,
    108:24, 109:2, 109:12,
    110:22
```

regard [1] - 107:10
regarded [1] - 105:25
regarding [5] - 89:1, 91:17,
91:23, 92:16, 93:9
regardless [2]-14:19, 41:11
regards [1] - 101:18
register [6] - 105:13, 106:10,
109:17, 109:22, 112:6, 114:3
registered [6] - 40:19, 41:11,
72:25, 77:15, 79:15,
112:21
registering [2] - 46:25, 109:19
registration [21] - 53:13,
65:11, 65:18, 90:20, 105:6,
106:8, 109:16, 111:6,
111:11, 111:13, 111:16,
112:11, 112:13, 112:15,
112:17, 113:13, 113:17,
113:25, 114:13, 114:19
regular [4]-96:1, 96:8,
96:15, 97:2
regulation [1] - 49:5
reinforce [1] - 89:7
reinforcing [1] - 81:7
Reinvent [2] - 48:8, 125:16
relate [2] - 54:4, 112:1
related [4]-50:23, 60:12, 116:15, 128:10
relating [2] - 51:25, 113:25
relationship [3] - 72:11,
122:6, 122:7
relationships [2]-77:24,
88:15
released [1] - 126:17
relies [1] - 77:23
religion [1]-2:18
religiously [1] - 115:14
remain [1] - 10:18
removed [2]-92:6, 118:11
renovations [1] - 81:23
Rent [1] - 2:19
rent [2]-99:18, 100:16
repeat [3]-27:24, 40:6,
95:14
replace [1]-68:24
report [5] - 53:9, 54:24,
55:13, 103:11, 118:15
reports [1]-10:16
Represent [3] - 50:1, 125:1, 125:15
represent [2]-13:7, 44:1
representation [11]-22:21, 24:22, 25:5, 37:24, 40:19, 41:5, 47:12, 97:25, 98:6,

98:9, 99:10
representative $[4]-8: 9$, 74:25, 85:12, 98:2
representatives [5] - 8:18, 22:9, 22:13, 22:14, 78:15 representing [3]-10:5, 18:19, 52:12
represents [1] - 58:15
Republican [3] - 46:9, 47:6, 111:22
republican [1]-42:1
Republicans [1] - 42:4
request [2] - 111:12, 116:23
requested [1] - 59:24
require [2] - 55:5, 100:18
required $[3]-6: 6,40: 20$, 82:11
requirement [2] - 29:19, 29:23
requirements [2]-29:13, 106:1
requires [3]-56:22, 59:10, 84:12
requiring [2] - 55:20, 60:22
research [4]-52:1, 53:14,
84:25, 122:4
researcher [1] - 3:7
reside [1] - 22:2
residency [1] - 29:19
resident [2] - 77:20, 83:22
residential [1] - 62:10
residents [17] - 18:23, 29:9, 29:25, 32:3, 66:8, 75:15, 75:21, 76:9, 78:5, 79:22, 79:25, 81:20, 83:10, 84:3, 85:5, 115:23, 119:7
resilience [1] - 18:25
resist [1] - 107:15
resolution [1] - 56:8
resource [1] - 76:13
resource-intensive [1] 76:13
resources [7]-26:3, 68:10, 79:2, 79:23, 117:22, 120:25, 122:13
respect $[4]-59: 17,62: 17$, 95:19, 102:15
respected [1] - 116:25
respond $[3]-16: 3,16: 4$, 116:1
responsible [2] - 10:21, 103:2
responsive [2]-62:23, 115:12
rest [3]-30:19, 60:14, 80:10
restricting [1] - 70:10
result [3]-57:15, 90:24, 100:3
resulting [2] - 80:24, 100:7
results [4]-16:24, 17:15,

57:4, 100:13
rethink
rethink [1] - 14:20
return [1] - 30:17
reveal [1]-55:8
revealed [1] - 53:10
revealing [1] - 51:3
review [5] - 4:23, 5:11, 6:9,
12:17, 18:18
Review [8] - 9:18, 10:3, 10:9,
10:24, 11:18, 12:4, 17:22,
24:9
reviled [1] - 107:22
revised [2] - 94:13, 94:16
REVISION [1] - 1:1
revision [4]-95:5, 104:14,
104:21, 111:23
Revision [9]-2:3, 2:12, 4:22,
12:16, 20:18, 28:9, 47:19,
49:20, 75:8
revisions [2]-19:12, 122:24
revisit [1] - 20:9
revive [1] - 15:23
revolutionary [1] - 40:17
revolving [1] - 29:14
reward [1] - 57:13
rewarded [1] - 96:10
rewarding [1] - 82:16
Reynoso [1] - 37:13
rezoned [1] - 119:3
rezoning [2] - 117:21, 119:7
rid [1] - 61:2
rigged [1] - 91:22
right [36]-2:10, 3:19, 16:11, 19:13, 19:25, 20:3, 26:16, 29:17, 30:21, 32:23, 34:2,
34:19, 42:19, 43:17, 48:1,
60:1, 60:3, 60:15, 60:20,
60:25, 68:19, 69:5, 89:1,
89:22, 96:6, 96:7, 97:12,
98:16, 99:1, 100:4, 109:12,
111:14, 113:11, 114:25,
121:8, 123:10
rights [8]-41:13, 43:3,
43:13, 45:25, 47:14, 47:17,
52:20, 94:18
Rights [3] - 4:10, 23:7, 98:8
risk [2] - 28:11, 100:13
risks [1] - 100:6
roadblock [1]-11:9
roadmap [1] - 13:19
Rob [1] - 117:6
Robert [1] - 114:22
robust ${ }_{[2]}-55: 5,105: 11$
role [8]-2:16, 2:19, 5:1, 5:8,
104:8, 115:9, 116:17,
116:24
roll [2] - 111:11, 112:11
rolled [1] - 89:5
rolls [1] - 46:12
roof [2]-26:19, 54:16
room [9]-3:13, 4:14, 28:4, 30:3, 56:9, 81:10, 87:20, 90:10, 103:3
roommate [1] - 103:23
rooted [1] - 21:3
round [4]-40:23, 41:10,
44:10, 45:5
route [1]-61:5
Roxanne [1] - 90:14
Rule [1] - 104:20
ruled [1] - 42:24
ruling [1] - 43:16
run [17]-25:25, 26:4, 29:9,
$31: 15,32: 6,32: 24,34: 1$,
37:12, 44:12, 50:15, 57:5,
58:8, 65:20, 76:14, 96:1, 123:11, 123:16
run-off [1] - 44:12
running [3]-31:8, 50:17, 126:20
runoff [12]-51:7, 51:12,
51:17, 92:20, 97:7, 106:17,
107:19, 108:1, 109:2, 109:5, 109:9, 109:13
runoffs [1] - 105:7
Russell [1] - 81:1

same [17] - 33:25, 34:16,
39:16, 50:9, 65:11, 65:18,
67:22, 68:7, 68:8, 96:14,
96:21, 96:23, 100:11,
111:19, 112:24, 114:13, 114:18
same-day [4]-65:11, 65:18, 114:13, 114:18
San [1] - 44:24
Saturday [2] - 71:1, 73:22
save [3]-53:20, 106:19, 109:15
saved [1] - 125:22
saving [1] - 97:6
savings [1] - 125:22
saw [3]-37:18, 80:23, 98:1
say [21]-11:14, 14:24, 17:21, 23:14, 27:15, 32:13, 37:3, 39:11, 39:15, 45:18,
55:18, 70:15, 74:19, 83:11,
89:21, 90:19, 91:16, 97:21,

| 111:1, 122:20, 124:7 <br> saying [9]-17:1, 17:12, <br> 23:13, 25:10, 34:5, 36:11, <br> 58:18, 109:5, 114:10 <br> says [2] - 38:22, 113:24 <br> scale [1] - 53:20 <br> scandal [1] - 37:16 <br> scenarios [1] - 91:8 <br> schedules [1]-65:7 <br> school [19] - 75:19, 76:25, <br> 78:22, 81:22, 81:23, 86:17, <br> 86:18, 86:23, 87:12, 87:16, <br> 87:24, 88:8, 88:12, 88:19, <br> 89:6, 89:7, 104:1, 108:4, <br> 119:25 <br> School [9] - 4:7, 4:18, 81:1, 104:11, 104:12, 106:21, 107:20, 107:25, 108:2 <br> school-based [1] - 86:23 <br> schooling [1] - 88:25 <br> schools [9] - 43:9, 62:10, <br> 75:22, 78:24, 81:24, 86:21, 87:5, 88:16, 89:14 <br> Schools [1] - 88:1 <br> science [1]-2:16 <br> season [1]-11:12 <br> seat [2]-19:9, 87:19 <br> Seattle [4] - 66:3, 76:4, <br> 96:19, 126:10 <br> second [6] - 14:10, 15:12, <br> 15:17, 49:25, 60:10, 97:7 <br> secondary [1] - 100:1 <br> seconds [1] - 127:1 <br> secretaries [1] - 115:6 <br> secretary [1] - 117:9 <br> secretary/treasurer [1] - <br> 3:21 <br> Section [4]-104:19, 105:3, 107:5, 113:17 <br> sections [1] - 123:7 <br> sectors [1] - 20:21 <br> see [27]-14:17, 17:4, 17:20, <br> 18:18, 25:12, 35:6, 36:22, <br> 37:2, 49:1, 61:20, 67:13, <br> 76:12, 76:15, 81:25, 82:12, <br> 84:15, 86:5, 88:20, 90:11, <br> 98:12, 107:6, 115:24, <br> 116:12, 116:14, 118:10, <br> 120:17, 127:5 <br> SEECHARRAN [5] - 1:18, <br> 3:24, 68:14, 69:19, 70:6 <br> Seecharran [1] - 3:25 <br> seeing [8] - 29:17, 37:10, 68:19, 82:14, 82:17, 84:3, 123:15, 125:14 <br> seeking [1] - 50:7 <br> seemed [1] - 84:9 <br> seems [2] - 54:9, 95:10 <br> seen [16]-21:19, 35:16, <br> 53:11, 56:12, 71:15, 71:23, | ```72:10, 84:6, 84:15, 84:17, 84:19, 85:15, 88:8, 123:13, 124:10, 124:12 segregation [1] - 18:14 SEIU [1] - 3:21 select [2] - 42:25, 81:17 selected [1] - 22:9 selection [3] - 42:20, 43:14, 82:13 self \([5]-69: 11,69: 18,118: 1\), 118:2, 118:6 self-dealing [2] - 69:11, 69:18 self-determination [3] - 118:1, 118:2, 118:6 sell [2] - 99:7, 100:6 selling [3]-31:17, 100:14, 101:6 Senate [1] - 38:3 senate [1]-34:24 send [6] - \(34: 3,51: 14,51: 15\), 72:24, 72:25, 73:4 sending [1] \(-34: 6\) senior [2] - 48:7, 76:25 sense [8] - 16:10, 22:18, 23:10, 43:11, 57:10, 59:15, 69:10, 78:2 sent [1] - 6:10 sentiments [1]-81:3 separate [8] - 71:11, 97:6, 111:10, 111:17, 112:3, 112:4, 112:10, 112:13 September [4] - 43:22, 43:25, 77:16, 111:19 serious [2] - 10:15, 21:7 seriously [3] - 88:14, 105:1, 107:2 servants [1] - 121:16 serve [6]-11:12, 17:17, 28:8, 39:8, 63:10, 80:9 served [3] - 16:9, 38:7, 80:19 service [4] - 120:1, 120:15, 120:16, 121:4 services [4]-62:8, 76:2, 96:22, 115:19 Services [1] - 48:23 serving [1] - 92:1 set [5] - 44:20, 56:21, 111:7, 117:18, 128:14 sets [2] - 20:1, 115:9 setting [2] - 3:15, 113:20 seven [4] - 34:3, 75:4, 106:5, 119:13 Seventeen [2] - 46:23, 57:2 several [1] - 64:23 severe [1]-46:10 sexual [1] - 10:16 shame [1] - 67:1 shape [3] - 14:1, 78:6 shaped [1] - 78:12``` | ```Shapiro [2] - 98:24, 99:3 SHAPIRO [1] - 99:1 share [3] - 59:2, 75:15, 122:23 sharing [1] - 14:3 she \([3]\) - 89:10, 89:11, 98:19 shelter [1]-102:3 shift [1] - 69:1 shifting [1] - 28:7 shoe's [1] - 27:13 shorter [2] - 113:20, 114:14 should [46] - 5:20, 14:9, 14:18, 19:12, 19:16, 19:20, 20:9, 20:13, 20:19, 30:13, 33:15, 36:15, 41:1, 41:2, 41:9, 41:16, 41:19, 41:20, 41:21, 47:17, 49:5, 54:22, 58:3, 60:1, 72:7, 74:15, 75:7, 75:23, 77:10, 86:20, 87:3, 88:22, 92:6, 92:12, 95:18, 98:8, 100:17, 103:18, 106:6, 106:9, 106:12, 106:15, 106:22, 110:8, 123:11, 125:15 shouldn't [5] - 23:13, 35:13, 41:17, 67:10, 97:15 show [1] - 118:18 showed [1] - 77:15 showing [1] - 53:12 sick [2] - 94:2, 94:20 Side [1] - 117:17 sidewalks [1] - 99:21 SIEGAL [11] - 1:18, 3:22, 21:14, 22:3, 22:24, 34:20, 54:19, 55:23, 107:13, 107:18, 108:8 Siegal [3]-3:22, 21:14, 34:20 Sierra [1] - 36:11 \(\operatorname{sign}[2]-2: 9,7: 8\) signed [3] - 2:8, 8:2, 119:8 significant [3] - 58:7, 68:20, 86:8 significantly [1] - 76:6 similar [3] - 9:9, 95:16, 96:19 simple [1] - 11:20 simplify [1] - 65:18 simply [5] - 56:19, 65:7, 72:21, 83:10, 119:15 since [17] - 10:19, 10:20, 27:13, 27:18, 40:25, 47:10, 71:16, 84:1, 84:2, 84:8, 86:25, 94:13, 94:15, 99:15, 108:15, 108:21 single [2] - 15:14, 85:17 sir \([1]\) - 101:23 sister [1] - 88:9 sisters [1] - 64:18 sit [2] - 120:19, 122:24 sited [1] - 2:25``` | sitting [2] - 37:7, 87:19 <br> situation [2] - 68:19, 72:19 <br> six [10] - 13:15, 24:16, 48:9, 50:11, 50:15, 102:20, 102:24, 103:6, 106:10, 123:7 <br> six-to-one [1] - 50:11 skip [1] - 65:17 <br> skipping [1] - 23:1 <br> sleep [1] - 39:3 <br> slightly [1]-2:4 <br> Slope [1] - 88:19 <br> Small [1] - 10:20 <br> small [17] - $28: 5,28: 16$, 28:20, 28:21, 28:22, 36:21, 49:24, 50:5, 50:11, 65:21, 99:10, 100:10, 100:21, 100:25, 101:10, 121:23, 127:1 <br> smaller [5] - 32:17, 32:21, 36:23, 49:9, 50:20 so [186] - 2:5, 3:2, 3:14, 3:16, 4:19, 5:12, 5:22, 7:9, 7:12, 7:16, 7:20, 7:22, 8:24, 9:3, 9:7, 9:14, 9:22, 9:23, 11:22, 13:2, 14:16, 14:22, 15:8, 17:24, 20:8, 21:9, 21:15, 22:6, 24:10, 24:25, 25:22, 26:2, 26:4, 26:18, 27:4, 27:9, 27:10, 28:22, 30:20, 30:23, 31:12, 32:12, 32:25, 34:10, 34:14, 35:16, 35:23, 36:2, 36:21, 37:7, 37:11, 37:14, 37:15, 38:1, 39:19, 39:21, 39:23, 40:4, 45:5, 45:9, 45:15, 47:5, 49:1, 49:15, 49:23, 50:16, 51:18, 54:11, 54:22, 55:2, 55:9, 55:15, 55:19, 55:20, 55:25, 56:3, 56:4, 57:12, 58:5, 59:2, 60:16, 61:24, 63:2, 63:11, 64:12, 65:19, 66:4, 67:18, 68:25, 69:10, 69:15, 69:19, 70:2, 70:15, 70:21, 71:15, 71:19, 72:5, 72:12, 72:15, 72:22, 72:25, 73:2, 73:11, 73:14, 73:15, 73:17, 74:1, 74:2, 74:7, 75:9, 75:16, 76:16, 76:19, 80:12, 83:14, 85:1, 86:10, 86:22, 87:17, 88:12, 88:20, 89:21, 90:12, 90:14, 91:19, 92:3, 94:6, 94:8, 94:12, 94:20, 94:24, 95:3, 98:3, 98:16, 98:22, 101:19, 101:25, 102:12, 103:13, 104:8, 107:6, 107:16, 107:18, 107:22, 109:1, 110:13, 110:21, 111:14, 112:3, 112:21, 113:5, |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |


| 113:8, 114:1, 114:4, 114:5, <br> 114:7, 114:20, 114:21, <br> 115:1, 115:2, 118:10, <br> 118:25, 119:3, 119:16, <br> 119:20, 120:5, 120:10, <br> 121:1, 121:2, 121:8, 121:9, <br> 121:19, 122:7, 123:11, <br> 124:24, 125:23, 126:4, <br> 127:9, 127:16 <br> So [1] - 125:19 <br> so-called [1] - 47:5 <br> social [5]-2:16, 6:16, 18:9, <br> 57:14, 89:16 <br> society [1] - 86:15 <br> Sol [1]-56:1 <br> sole [1] - 12:7 <br> solution [3] - 12:15, 109:5 <br> solutions [2] - 95:22, 125:23 <br> solving $[1]$ - 81:13 <br> some [20]-19:15, 24:11, <br> 26:20, 33:17, 33:18, 46:18, <br> 54:5, 55:7, 59:2, 59:4, <br> 59:10, 64:14, 67:24, 86:25, <br> 91:7, 91:25, 119:8, 123:12, <br> 126:23 <br> somebody [6] - 17:13, 32:17, <br> 35:24, 38:20, 38:21, 53:2 <br> somehow [1] - 109:3 <br> someone [5] - 17:9, 26:4, <br> 40:10, 94:21, 100:15 <br> someone's [1] - 73:22 <br> something [16] - 14:25, 17:5, <br> 29:16, 35:12, 49:16, 49:18, <br> 50:12, 51:4, 51:16, 54:7, <br> 55:21, 61:16, 114:14, <br> 122:8, 122:20, 125:25 <br> sometimes [2] - 85:11 <br> somewhat [1] - 37:4 <br> somewhere [1] - 39:13 <br> son [2] - 16:18, 16:20 <br> soon [1]-7:5 <br> sorry [8] - 25:18, 32:24, 34:3, <br> 65:17, 87:5, 90:19, 101:23, <br> 106:21 <br> sort [10] - 25:10, 38:18, 68:1, 72:10, 85:12, 85:18, 89:8, 111:10, 118:3, 123:12 <br> sounds [1] - 30:24 <br> southeast [2] - 124:11, <br> 124:12 <br> span [1] - 56:22 <br> Spanish [2]-7:11, 7:14 <br> speak [15]-7:23, 8:10, 8:13, 46:5, 56:5, 59:13, 61:20, <br> 62:12, 63:19, 64:9, 70:22, <br> 73:23, 74:15, 76:17, 93:10 <br> SPEAKER [6] - 45:16, 87:10, <br> 87:13, 89:3, 90:5, 98:18 <br> speaker [1] - 8:5 <br> speaking [5] - 8:23, 83:16, |  | ```Staten [3] - 4:3, 7:1, 25:1 states [9]-49:8, 51:16, 54:9, 54:14, 106:5, 106:7, 106:11, 106:13, 125:4 States [5] - 29:2, 46:17, 47:14, 47:25, 110:7 statewide [1] - 34:24 stations [1] - 81:24 statistics [1]-61:11 status [1] - 59:6 staying [1] - 127:10 Steering [2] - 9:16, 10:1 stenographic [1] - 128:9 step [7]-20:18, 54:12, 84:24, 85:3, 106:4, 107:1, 126:11 steps [2] - 7:16, 49:24 Steven [5] - 101:17, 101:19, 101:25, 102:21, 103:8 still [5] - 28:11, 92:10, 102:24, 103:5, 125:14 stop [4] - 34:5, 34:6, 78:18, 91:12 Stop [1] - 103:3 stopped [1] - 58:4 stops [1] - 32:8 story [1] - 39:10 strain [1] - 24:24 strange [1] - 64:17 strategic [1] - 86:5 strategies [3]-18:17, 19:14, 20:15 strategy [1] - 93:4 streamed [1] - 6:23 Street [3] - 20:4, 99:4, 99:5 street \([7]\) - 60:24, 100:8, 101:1, 101:3, 123:9, 124:13 streets [2] - 82:3, 99:20 strengthen [4]-20:10, 21:6, 62:19, 116:5 strengthened [3]-13:25, 27:22, 117:1 stroke [1] - 105:9 strong [2] - 26:20, 41:13 strongly [1] - 83:8 structure [1] - 20:10 structured [1] - 8:16 structures [1] - 79:9 struggling [1] - 101:10 student [4]-77:3, 77:7, 78:14, 78:21 student-led [1] - 77:3 student-organized [1] - 77:7 students [14]-77:8, 78:10, 78:18, 78:20, 78:24, 79:2, 79:5, 79:12, 81:6, 87:1, 88:8, 88:17, 88:18, 89:4 students' [1]-78:11``` | ```studied [1] - 104:13 studies [1] - 89:16 study \([2]\) - 125:16, 126:17 stuff [1] - 39:25 subcontractors [1] - 50:25 submission [2] - 64:16, 64:19 submitting [1] - 26:12 subsidy [1] - 19:19 subways [1] - \(58: 5\) succeed [1] - 26:4 success [4]-26:23, 49:23, 53:1, 53:6 successful [1] - 20:24 successfully [1] - 76:15 Such [1] - 79:4 such [11] - 17:9, 21:22, 64:1, 68:25, 69:10, 70:3, 77:12, 91:8, 103:18, 105:16, 116:17 sued [1] - 51:17 suffer [1] - 17:16 suffers [1] - 77:13 sufficient [1] - 33:16 sufficiently [1] -6:1 suggest [1] - 96:17 suggested \([1]\) - 113:23 suggesting [6] - 53:3, 110:13, 110:14, 111:9, 112:10, 114:6 suggestion [1] - 114:2 suggestions [2] - 6:21, 62:19 suitably [1] - 64:20 summarize [2]-65:16, 101:24 summary [2] - 28:13, 107:6 Sunday [1] - 71:2 Sunnyside [1] - 40:13 super [2] - 14:15, 119:20 super-cool [1] - 119:20 super-expensive [1] - 14:15 supervising [1] - 103:20 supervisor [1] - 103:16 support [23] - 13:14, 19:14, 20:13, 20:21, 20:22, 26:17, 37:9, 38:22, 51:6, 65:23, 66:21, 74:16, 76:11, 76:16, 77:10, 78:9, 79:11, 80:15, 91:23, 92:2, 101:8, 120:11, 121:1 supported [1] - 74:12 supporting [2]-20:16, 67:12 supportive [1] - 87:24 supports [1] - 51:5 supposed [3]-10:25, 17:17, 102:12 suppression [1] - 46:11 Supreme [4] - 42:24, 43:16,``` |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |



| 118:4, 118:7, 118:11, 118:13, 118:18, 119:3, 119:6, 119:9, 119:23, 120:1, 120:2, 120:11, 120:12, 120:13, 120:17, 121:3, 121:6, 121:7, 121:10, 121:16, 121:19, 121:22, 121:25, 122:2, 122:12, 123:2, 123:5, 123:18, 125:5, 125:21, 125:25, 126:14, 128:10, 128:12 <br> that's [38] - 11:17, 14:13, 15:5, 15:10, 22:6, 24:2, 29:16, 31:10, 32:12, 33:16, 36:14, 36:15, 38:18, 39:1, 39:4, 44:10, 44:22, 49:18, 49:23, 51:16, 54:7, 57:1, 71:12, 73:14, 89:12, 89:23, 95:5, 102:24, 107:23, 109:14, 110:6, 110:25, 111:11, 113:11, 114:7, 114:17, 121:17, 124:6 the [1163]-2:2, 2:5, 2:7, 2:8, 2:9, 2:11, 2:12, 2:14, 2:15, 2:16, 2:19, 2:21, 2:23, 2:24, 3:11, 3:15, 3:17, 3:18, 3:19, 3:25, 4:3, 4:6, 4:10, 4:21, 4:23, 4:24, 5:1, 5:2, 5:5, 5:8, 5:9, 5:11, 5:12, 5:13, 5:22, 5:23, 5:24, 6:5, 6:8, 6:16, 6:19, 7:1, 7:16, 7:22, 7:25, 8:1, 8:2, 8:6, 8:11, 8:14, 8:21, 9:4, 9:10, 9:11, 9:13, 9:16, 9:17, 10:1, 10:2, 10:8, 10:10, 10:11, 10:12, 10:18, 10:21, 11:1, 11:3, 11:5, 11:8, 11:16, 12:3, 12:9, 12:11, 12:12, 12:15, 12:16, 12:17, 12:18, 12:20, 12:21, 12:22, 12:25, 13:9, 13:12, 13:14, 13:15, 13:19, 13:20, 13:25, 14:1, 14:3, 14:12, 14:16, 14:17, 14:20, 14:21, 14:24, 15:1, 15:6, 15:8, 15:18, 15:19, 16:1, 16:8, 16:17, 16:18, 16:19, 16:21, 16:22, 16:23, 16:25, 17:1, 17:2, 17:3, 17:4, 17:5, 17:6, 17:7, 17:8, 17:10, 17:13, 17:16, 17:18, 17:20, 17:22, 18:3, 18:6, 18:10, 18:20, 18:22, 19:1, 19:2, 19:3, 19:7, 19:8, 19:11, 19:13, 19:15, 19:18, 19:20, 19:25, 20:2, 20:6, 20:9, 20:10, 20:11, 20:13, 20:18, 20:19, 20:25, 21:6, 21:9, 21:15, 21:18, 21:19, 21:24, 22:4, 22:16, 22:19, 22:24, | 23:2, 23:3, 23:5, 23:6, 23:11, 23:14, 23:16, 23:18, 23:20, 23:24, 24:3, 24:5, 24:8, 24:9, 24:11, 24:12, 24:17, 24:19, 24:22, 25:2, 25:3, 25:4, 25:7, 25:19, 25:20, 26:5, 26:6, 26:18, 27:3, 27:4, 27:5, 27:13, 27:19, 27:20, 28:1, 28:3, 28:7, 28:8, 28:9, 28:10, 28:13, 28:15, 28:19, 28:20, 28:21, 28:24, 29:1, 29:2, 29:4, 29:7, 29:12, 29:13, 29:14, 29:18, 29:20, 29:23, 29:24, 29:25, 30:8, 30:9, 30:10, 30:19, 30:22, 30:24, 30:25, 31:1, 31:14, 31:19, 31:21, 31:23, 32:2, 32:11, 32:13, 32:14, 32:15, 33:3, 33:5, 33:7, 33:8, 33:14, 33:20, 33:24, 34:2, 34:4, 34:7, 34:16, 35:1, 35:2, 35:4, 35:7, 35:8, 35:9, 35:11, 35:13, 35:15, 35:17, 35:21, 35:22, 35:25, 36:2, 36:8, 36:11, 37:5, 37:16, 37:19, 37:23, 37:25, 38:2, 38:3, 38:5, 38:6, 38:7, 38:10, 38:17, 38:21, 38:25, 39:1, 39:10, 39:12, 39:15, 39:16, 39:25, 40:1, 40:2, 40:10, 40:15, 40:16, 40:23, 41:8, 41:10, 41:13, 41:25, 42:2, 42:3, 42:4, 42:11, 42:20, 42:24, 42:25, 43:1, 43:12, 43:16, 43:17, 43:18, 43:19, 43:21, 43:22, 43:23, 43:24, 43:25, 44:2, 44:6, 44:9, 44:13, 44:14, 44:22, 45:5, 45:22, 45:25, 46:1, 46:3, 46:4, 46:5, 46:6, 46:8, 46:13, 46:15, 46:16, 47:9, 47:10, 47:11, 47:13, 47:14, 47:15, 47:20, 47:22, 47:23, 47:25, 48:1, 48:2, 48:7, 48:13, 48:18, 48:20, 48:21, 48:22, 48:23, 49:3, 49:4, 49:6, 49:11, 49:13, 49:16, 49:20, 49:21, 49:22, 50:2, 50:6, 50:7, 50:9, 50:10, 50:14, 50:16, 50:19, 50:23, 51:3, 51:10, 51:12, 51:13, 52:9, 52:10, 52:13, 52:20, 52:24, 52:25, 53:6, 53:8, 53:9, 53:11, 53:16, 53:18, 53:21, 54:3, 54:8, 54:11, 54:14, 54:20, 54:23, 55:3, 55:8, 55:10, 55:11, 55:12, 55:14, 55:18, 55:20, 55:21, 56:6, 56:10, 56:15, 56:18, 56:19, 56:25, 57:2, | 57:4, 57:5, 57:7, 57:8, 57:10, 57:11, 57:16, 57:17, 57:19, 57:21, 57:22, 58:1, 58:3, 58:4, 58:6, 58:8, 58:13, 58:22, 58:24, 59:8, 59:9, 59:10, 59:11, 59:14, 59:16, 59:17, 59:18, 59:19, 59:20, 59:22, 59:23, 59:24, 59:25, 60:1, 60:3, 60:4, 60:6, 60:7, 60:10, 60:12 60:14, 60:15, 60:16, 60:17, 60:18, 60:19, 60:20, 60:23, 60:24, 60:25, 61:1, 61:4, 61:5, 61:7, 61:8, 61:9, 61:10, 61:11, 61:13, 61:14, 61:15, 61:18, 61:20, 61:23, 62:3, 62:5, 62:9, 62:15, 62:16, 62:23, 62:24, 62:25, 63:2, 63:4, 63:5, 63:10, 63:13, 63:14, 63:16, 63:18, 63:19, 63:20, 63:21, 63:23, 64:3, 64:4, 64:5, 64:7, 64:11, 64:16, 64:17, 64:18, 64:20, 64:25, 65:3, 65:4, 65:13, 65:14, 65:18, 65:20, 65:24, 66:4, 66:22, 66:23, 66:24, 66:25, 67:13, 67:19, 67:21, 67:22, 67:25, 68:7, 68:8, 68:18, 68:22, 68:24, 69:2, 69:3, 69:4, 69:6, 69:8, 69:9, 69:14, 69:15, 69:17, 69:19, 69:23, 69:24, 69:25, 70:1, 70:17, 70:21, 70:23, 70:24, 71:8, 71:12, 71:17, 71:18, 72:3, 72:8, 72:12, 72:16, 72:17, 72:18, 73:2, 73:6, 73:8, 73:9, 73:13, 73:17, 73:18, 74:10, 74:11, 74:15, 74:16, 75:2, 75:8, 75:13, 75:14, 75:15, 75:17, 75:18, 75:19, 75:23, 76:3, 76:12, 76:21, 76:22, 76:23, 76:24, 77:1, 77:7, 77:16, 77:19, 78:4, 78:6, 78:9, 78:10, 78:12, 78:16, 78:17, 79:16, 79:21, 79:22, 79:23, 80:1, 80:3, 80:7, 80:10, 80:14, 80:18, 80:21, 80:22, 81:2, 81:3, 81:9, 81:14, 81:16, 81:25, 82:2, 82:3, 82:4, 82:8, 82:12, 82:15, 82:16, 82:20, 82:22, 82:25, 83:4, 83:5, 83:9, 83:10, 83:18, 83:19, 83:20, 83:22, 83:23, 83:24, 84:1, 84:4, 84:5, 84:8, 84:16, 84:18, 84:22, 84:24, 84:25, 85:1, 85:2, 85:3, 85:5, 85:13, 85:14, 85:16, 85:17, 86:3, 86:4, 86:7, 86:8, 86:11, 86:14, 86:17, 86:18, | 86:20, 86:22, 87:1, 87:2, 87:5, 87:15, 87:19, 88:3, 88:11, 88:22, 88:25, 89:1, 89:8, 89:15, 89:20, 89:23, 90:3, 90:5, 90:7, 90:8, 90:9, 90:11, 90:19, 90:21, 90:22, 91:1, 91:8, 91:9, 91:10, 91:12, 91:17, 91:21, 92:1, 92:6, 92:7, 92:11, 92:13, 92:14, 92:16, 92:18, 92:19, 92:20, 92:22, 93:1, 93:3, 93:10, 93:15, 93:16, 93:19, 93:22, 94:5, 94:6, 94:8, 94:14, 94:15, 94:16, 94:18, 94:22, 95:1, 95:4, 95:5, 95:7, 95:23, 96:2, 96:5, 96:6, 96:7, 96:9, 96:14, 96:21, 96:23, 97:6, 97:8, 97:11, 97:14, 97:15, 97:16, 97:17, 97:24, 98:2, 98:7, 98:10, 98:11, 98:15, 99:2, 99:3, 99:4, 99:5, 99:8, 99:12, 99:14, 99:15, 99:22, 99:24, 100:1, 100:2, 100:4, 100:5, 100:10, 100:16, 100:17, 100:18, 100:23, 101:2, 101:4, 101:5, 101:6, 101:7, 101:8, 101:10, 101:11, 101:17, 101:19, 101:20, 102:1, 102:6, 102:9, 102:12, 102:13, 102:14, 102:15, 102:16, 102:18, 102:22, 102:23, 102:24, 103:3, 103:5, 103:9, 103:11, 103:14, 103:15, 103:16, 103:19, 103:24, 104:4, 104:5, 104:6, 104:13, 104:16, 104:17, 104:19, 104:21, 105:1, 105:2, 105:3, 105:4, 105:10, 105:13, 105:14, 105:15, 105:16, 105:19, 105:22, 105:23, 106:3, 106:4, 106:7, 106:9, 106:10, 106:18, 106:19, 106:22, 107:3, 107:6, 107:8, 107:9, 107:15, 108:5, 108:9, 108:10, 108:14, 108:15, 108:16, 108:18, 109:4, 109:5, 109:6, 109:10, 109:11, 109:14, 109:15, 109:21, 109:23, 109:25, 110:5, 110:6, 110:7, 110:10, 110:13, 110:14, 110:17, 110:25, 111:2, 111:8, 111:14, 111:15, 111:19, 111:23, 111:25, 112:2, 112:6, 112:15, 112:16, 112:17, 112:19, 112:20, 112:23, 113:1, |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |

113:3, 113:4, 113:5, 113:6, 113:7, 113:9, 113:13, 113:15, 113:17, 113:19, 113:21, 113:23, 113:24, 114:2, 114:5, 114:7, 114:10, 114:15, 114:23, 115:1, 115:4, 115:7, 115:8, 115:9, 115:11, 115:12, 115:18, 115:19, 115:20, 115:22, 115:23, 115:24, 116:1, 116:2, 116:3, 116:4, 116:7, 116:8, 116:9, 116:11, 116:12, 116:14, 116:16, 116:18, 116:22, 116:23, 116:24, 117:4, 117:5, 117:9, 117:12, 117:15, 117:16, 117:17, 117:19, 117:21, 117:22, 117:23, 118:4, 118:5, 118:6, 118:7, 118:8, 118:9, 118:10, 118:13, 118:16, 118:17, 118:20, 118:22, 118:23, 118:24, 119:1, 119:4, 119:7, 119:9, 119:15, 119:22, 120:6, 120:7, 120:9, 120:14, 120:15, 120:17, 120:20, 120:23, 120:25, 121:4, 121:5, 121:6, 121:10, 121:17, 121:24, 122:1, 122:3, 122:8, 122:10, 122:11, 122:17, 122:25, 123:1, 123:3, 123:5, 123:8, 123:9, 123:10, 123:17, 123:23, 124:1, 124:2, 124:6, 124:8, 124:9, 124:10, 124:12, 124:17, 124:21, 124:22, 124:25, 125:4, 125:6, 125:8, 125:11, 125:13, 125:23, 125:24, 126:1, 126:3, 126:5, 126:6, 126:7, 126:9, 126:18, 126:23, 127:3, 127:8, 127:20, 127:21, 128:7, 128:8, 128:11, 128:12
The $[4]-6: 7,48: 19,65: 11$, 100:10
their [65]-12:10, 15:16, 16:5, 19:8, 25:16, 27:4, 29:22, 31:17, 31:18, 33:2, $35: 25,36: 7,37: 5,41: 14$, 41:16, 41:20, 42:20, 43:12, 43:14, 43:15, 43:18, 49:11, 50:6, 52:13, 52:14, 53:10, 55:2, 55:13, 57:20, 60:18, 60:22, 62:8, 63:6, 64:5, 64:11, 64:13, 65:6, 65:9, 65:10, 65:12, 68:9, 68:10, 72:3, 73:16, 75:22, 77:15, $77: 25,78: 18,78: 19,79: 6$,

79:19, 79:23, 81:13, 81:16, 81:18, 82:23, 83:3, 89:21, 91:15, 94:21, 99:9, 103:22, 116:15, 126:13
them [29]-9:1, 16:10, 25:12, 26:4, 26:15, 38:22, 44:1, 45:12, 51:14, 55:2, 59:19, 60:7, 62:21, 67:4, 67:17, 70:25, 71:10, 72:2, 72:3, 73:16, 75:6, 88:23, 95:18, 99:18, 106:6, 107:3, 107:23
themselves $[7]-3: 18,8: 22$, 11:9, 52:17, 68:24, 88:9, 119:2
then [36] - 5:8, 7:19, 9:9, 11:3, 11:21, 13:14, 14:23, 15:20, 17:10, 17:16, 22:9, 22:14, 25:17, 26:14, 32:7, 36:1, 41:19, 50:19, 50:22, 51:6, 60:23, 60:25, 63:21, 68:22, 71:22, 72:10, 82:22, 82:23, 86:25, 89:17, 91:16, 98:10, 99:23, 103:22, 112:24, 120:12
theoretically [1] - 112:7
there [59]-6:7, 6:10, 6:11,
7:1, 7:20, 8:17, 9:9, 14:23, 21:22, 23:5, 24:13, 26:20, 28:4, 29:22, 30:11, 31:13, 32:7, 33:22, 34:22, 37:15, 42:2, 46:7, 47:4, 47:6, 51:15, 53:2, 54:14, 55:17, 56:24, 58:6, 61:15, 67:7, 67:9, 68:5, 69:23, 72:20, 76:18, 77:9, 82:20, 82:22, 89:22, 90:25, 91:7, 93:17, 100:22, 102:6, 103:11, 103:16, 106:13, 108:3, 108:9, 109:7, 111:10, 118:12, 121:1, 122:21, 123:11
There [1] - 8:5
there's [40]-12:2, 14:25, $15: 17,16: 11,17: 12,26: 14$, 30:3, 30:20, 32:8, 35:17, 39:13, 43:6, 50:17, 51:7, 51:13, 52:1, 52:7, 59:5, 69:10, 70:2, 76:11, 77:18, 86:1, 90:6, 90:10, 90:24, 91:20, 102:18, 103:13, 104:1, 112:24, 121:8, 121:9, 121:12, 121:19, 123:21, 126:4, 126:17
thereby [1] - 126:3
therefore [1] - 112:18 these [48]-5:10, 10:17, $13: 25,14: 14,18: 23,20: 21$, 25:8, 25:9, 37:22, 42:23, 43:13, 47:8, 49:2, 52:12,
$53: 19,54: 5,54: 15,55: 1$,
$59: 4,62: 4,62: 18,63: 4$ 59:4, 62:4, 62:18, 63:4, 65:4, 67:6, 77:10, 82:9, 85:2, 85:13, 88:17, 88:21, 91:10, 94:16, 94:17, 97:2, 99:17, 101:10, 106:25, 107:10, 108:6, 109:2, 115:20, 116:12, 117:14, 117:18, 119:18, 121:16, 123:14, 126:24
they [79]-7:6, 12:10, 14:15, 16:9, 22:17, 26:5, 27:3, 32:18, 32:23, 32:24, 32:25, 33:1, 37:8, 37:21, 38:5, 41:11, 41:15, 41:17, 41:18, 43:8, 43:9, 43:10, 43:13, 44:16, 52:5, 52:6, 52:7, 52:9, 52:21, 53:13, 54:23, 55:16, 60:2, 62:16, 65:9, 67:4, 68:4, 68:8, 68:25, 69:13, 75:11, 78:16, 88:22, 89:7, 89:16, 89:17, 89:20, 91:21, 92:11, 92:22, 94:3, 96:24, 96:25, 101:6, 102:7, 102:8, 102:13, 107:21, 108:8, 108:14, 110:11, $110: 15,110: 19,112: 1$, 119:24, 119:25, 120:1, 120:2, 124:2, 124:3, 124:4, 124:16, 124:17, 124:18, 124:19, 126:13
thing [10] - 21:22, 30:17, 39:4, 87:22, 111:1, 119:4, 120:8, 121:18, 123:22, 124:9
things [18] - 25:3, 26:15, 53:23, 59:4, 67:8, 71:8, 71:15, 119:19, 119:21, 120:12, 120:17, 121:1, 121:4, 121:5, 122:21, 123:14, 124:19
think [84]-3:1, 12:17, 22:8,
22:18, 25:14, 25:22, 25:25, 26:5, 30:12, 31:2, 32:15, $34: 12,34: 14,34: 15,34: 22$, 36:15, 36:16, 37:21, 38:6, 38:9, 39:4, 49:4, 49:15, 50:4, 50:13, 51:1, 51:10, 52:10, 53:18, 53:22, 54:12, 54:13, 55:19, 58:19, 58:24, 59:8, 59:15, 59:25, 60:4, 65:22, 66:13, 66:15, 67:25, 68:18, 69:4, 69:8, 69:15, 72:5, 73:24, 74:20, 84:9, 85:14, 86:3, 87:3, 87:25, 88:10, 88:13, 88:22, 89:6, 89:9, 89:10, 89:13, 89:14, 89:19, 89:22, 92:17, 95:4, 95:18, 98:11, 98:20, 105:14, 107:23, 108:11, 109:1, 109:10, 109:12,

110:23, 111:18, 114:23, 117:24, 118:12, 120:16, 121:11, 124:20
thinking [2]-25:21, 59:11 third [2]-50:9, 61:7
Thirty [2]-47:1, 106:5
Thirty-four [1] - 47:1
Thirty-seven [1] - 106:5
this [167]-2:2, 2:5, 3:3, 3:5, $3: 12,4: 8,4: 14,4: 21,5: 23$, $6: 2,6: 5,6: 23,7: 13,7: 21$, 7:24, 11:7, 11:15, 11:19, 12:8, 12:11, 12:14, 12:20, 12:22, 13:7, 14:7, 18:18, 19:15, 21:20, 23:14, 23:25, 24:10, 24:19, 25:22, 27:17, 28:5, 28:18, 29:8, 31:20, 32:23, 34:21, 34:25, 35:19, $36: 4,36: 11,36: 13,38: 22$, 38:23, 39:24, 41:6, 42:18, 42:21, 43:2, 44:6, 45:13, 47:9, 47:19, 53:22, 54:23, 56:9, 56:10, 56:14, 57:11, 58:16, 58:23, 59:6, 59:18, 61:19, 64:9, 67:1, 67:17, 67:21, 68:24, 69:1, 71:16, 71:17, 71:21, 74:21, 75:7, 75:21, 76:3, 76:14, 77:16, 80:3, 80:8, 80:23, 81:2, 81:10, 81:20, 81:21, 82:14, 82:18, 82:24, 83:6, 83:8, 83:23, 84:6, 84:19, 84:23, 84:24, 85:9, 86:2, 86:4, 86:8, 86:17, 86:19, 86:21, 87:6, 87:7, 89:4, 89:7, 89:15, 89:18, 89:23, 90:7, 90:8, 90:11, 91:12, 91:19, 92:14, 94:12, 94:19, 95:2, 95:6, 95:8, 96:10, 96:18, 97:14, 98:1, 99:24, 100:4, 100:19, 101:23, 103:3, 103:4, 105:9, 105:23, 106:20, 106:23, 107:14, 110:3, 111:15, 111:18, 114:24, 115:17, 116:21, 117:16, 117:24, 118:19, 118:24, 118:25, 119:17, 119:23, 120:7, 120:8, 120:19, 121:22, 122:18, 123:13, 123:22, 124:24, 126:10, 127:5, 128:11, 128:12, 128:15
those [55]-7:2, 7:19, 10:22, 11:11, 12:2, 12:8, 26:22, 31:3, 31:9, 31:12, 33:24, 34:14, 44:18, 49:14, 50:12, 52:11, 53:23, 54:10, 57:19, 57:24, 61:3, 61:17, 61:21, 64:8, 65:25, 67:22, 68:16, 70:25, 71:2, 71:15, 72:25,

75:16, 78:13, 78:24, 79:17, 80:25, 81:17, 95:11, 100:3, 100:24, 102:11, 108:4, 109:4, 110:22, 116:10, 121:1, 121:5, 122:24, 123:11, 123:17, 123:18, 123:25, 124:16, 124:19 though [4]-91:3, 93:17, 123:1, 125:11
thought $[4]-26: 2,37: 3$, 111:5, 111:8
thoughtful [2] - 84:5, 85:4 thoughts [5] - 53:5, 59:3,
85:18, 88:25, 119:21
thousand [4]-14:6, 21:1, 35:3, 100:7
thousand-dollar [1] - 100:7
thousands [1]-6:10
threatens [1]-38:21
three $[18]-8: 5,10: 6,14: 6$,
20:1, 22:1, 22:4, 24:15,
31:2, 31:3, 58:17, 74:12, 80:21, 82:15, 102:14,
108:2, 124:6, 124:8,
125:22
three-member [1]-20:1
threes [1] - 25:13
threshold [1] - 92:19
thrive ${ }_{[2]}$ - 62:16, 100:1
thriving $[1]-84: 4$
through $[26]-13: 17,16: 19$, 16:21, 18:15, 20:8, 20:16, 24:3, 24:15, 24:16, 28:12, 35:9, 38:6, 39:25, 47:21, 55:1, 60:18, 61:1, 64:7, 69:24, 79:3, 82:12, 82:14, 84:6, 91:18, 111:23, 118:22
throughout [5] - 62:18,
81:20, 82:4, 103:14, 115:10
throw [1]-11:4
tied $[1]-11: 1$
tilting $[1]-118: 8$
time [47]-2:21, 3:9, 8:14, 17:20, 24:9, 28:1, 33:2, 33:5, 35:24, 39:25, 43:15, 49:21, 51:13, 55:14, 57:23, 58:16, 71:14, 73:7, 73:17, 73:22, 74:9, 76:19, 78:5, 78:7, 81:1, 83:8, 83:13, 84:12, 84:15, 84:17, 92:1, 93:18, 94:11, 95:7, 97:19, 107:15, 116:19, 116:21, 117:5, 119:18, 120:21, 120:24, 122:3, 122:17, 123:3, 124:6, 126:22
times [2]-15:21, 95:10
tired [1] - 124:23
to [829]-2:2, 2:7, 2:17, 3:2,
$3: 3,3: 4,3: 5,3: 11,3: 12$ $3: 14,3: 17,3: 19,4: 8,4: 11$, $4: 13,4: 22,4: 23,5: 1,5: 2$, 5:3, 5:4, 5:7, 5:8, 5:9, 5:10, 5:11, 5:18, 5:19, 5:21, 5:22, 5:24, 6:1, 6:9, 6:10, 6:11, 6:19, 6:22, 7:3, 7:10, $7: 13,7: 14,7: 16,7: 18$, $7: 22,7: 23,7: 25,8: 3,8: 4$, 8:6, 8:10, 8:12, 8:13, 8:20, 8:21, 8:22, 8:25, 9:1, 9:3, 9:4, 9:6, 9:7, 9:11, 9:12, 9:13, 9:14, 9:20, 9:22, 10:7, 10:8, 10:25, 11:2, 11:9, 11:10, 11:12, 11:15, 11:22, 12:4, 12:7, 12:13, 12:16, 12:20, 12:21, 12:22, 12:24, 13:6, 13:7, 13:12, $13: 14,13: 16,13: 20,13: 21$, 13:22, 14:6, 14:7, 14:11, 14:17, 14:19, 14:20, 14:21, $15: 16,15: 17,15: 22,15: 23$, $15: 24,16: 2,16: 3,16: 4$, 16:5, 16:7, 16:8, 16:10, 16:11, 16:20, 16:25, 17:4, 17:8, 17:9, 17:10, 17:11, $17: 15,17: 17,17: 19,17: 21$, 17:22, 18:5, 18:11, 18:14, 18:22, 18:24, 19:2, 19:13, 19:14, 19:22, 20:7, 20:20, 20:22, 20:25, 21:1, 21:3, 21:7, 21:8, 21:10, 21:12, 21:17, 22:10, 22:16, 22:21, 23:1, 23:3, 23:4, 23:10, 23:11, 23:14, 23:22, 24:8, 24:10, 24:12, 24:14, 24:17, 25:5, 25:8, 25:9, 25:11, 25:15, 25:18, 25:24, 26:4, 26:16, 26:17, 26:19, 26:23, 27:16, 27:17, 28:5, 28:8, 28:9, 28:10, 28:12, 28:15, 28:19, 28:20, 29:1, 29:6, 29:8, 29:9, 29:11, 29:13, 29:14, 29:23, 30:18, 30:19, 30:25, 31:1, 31:11, 31:14, $31: 15,31: 18,31: 25,32: 5$, 32:6, 32:18, 32:20, 32:21, 32:24, 33:1, 33:3, 34:2, 34:8, $34: 14,34: 22,35: 6$, $35: 8,35: 19,35: 22,36: 2$, 36:3, 36:5, 36:6, 36:9, $36: 13,36: 14,37: 2,37: 5$, 37:9, 37:11, 37:12, 37:16, 37:24, 38:2, 38:3, 39:2, 39:8, 39:11, 39:17, 39:18, 39:24, 40:1, 40:4, 40:20, 40:21, 40:23, 41:2, 41:3, 41:5, 41:8, 41:10, 41:11, 41:14, 41:16, 41:21, 42:13, 42:19, 42:23, 42:25, 43:4, 43:12, 43:17, 44:17, 44:18,
$45: 1,45: 6,45: 9,45: 12$, 45:22, 46:3, 46:5, 46:11, 47:16, 47:17, 47:18, 47:20, 47:24, 48:1, 48:9, 48:11, 48:13, 48:24, 49:1, 50:2, 50:3, 50:10, 50:11, 50:12, 50:13, 50:16, 50:18, 50:20, 50:23, 50:24, 51:11, 51:14, 51:25, 52:8, 52:10, 52:12, 52:13, 52:25, 53:5, 53:18, 54:5, 54:6, 54:19, 54:23, 55:15, 55:20, 56:1, 56:5, 56:7, 56:19, 56:20, 57:3, 57:5, 57:6, 57:12, 57:13, 57:14, 57:19, 57:20, 57:22, 57:24, 58:3, 58:4, 58:7, 58:8, 58:16, 58:17, 58:18, 58:23, 58:24, 59:2, 59:11, 59:12, 59:13, 59:17, 59:22, 60:1, 60:6, 60:7, 60:9, 60:10, 60:11, 60:12, 60:15, 60:17, 60:18, 60:20, 60:23, 60:25, 61:5, 61:7, 61:11, 61:16, 61:19, 61:20, 61:21, 62:3, 62:10, 62:14, 62:15, 62:16, 62:19, 62:21, 62:22, 62:23, 62:25, 63:2, 63:4, 63:7, 63:9, 63:10, 63:14, 63:17, 63:19, 63:22, 63:24, 64:3, 64:10, 64:11, 64:13, 64:17, 64:20, 64:21, 64:22, 65:3, 65:8, 65:9, 65:16, 65:20, 65:22, 66:12, 66:16, 66:19, 66:20, 66:21, 66:23, 66:25, 67:1, 67:3, 67:6, 67:10, 67:11, 67:13, 67:14, 67:16, 67:17, 67:21, 68:10, 68:23, 69:5, 69:6, 69:7, 69:25, 70:1, 70:11, 70:12, 70:13, 70:17, 70:18, 70:19, 70:24, 70:25, 71:2, 71:6, 71:9, 71:10, 71:13, 71:14, 71:20, 71:21, 72:1, 72:2, 72:3, 72:9, 72:13, 72:16, 72:18, 72:24, 72:25, 73:1, 73:5, 73:10, 73:12, 73:14, 73:15, 73:16, 73:17, 73:21, 73:22, 73:23, 73:24, 74:2, 74:5, 74:19, 74:21, 74:22, 75:11, 75:12, 75:13, 75:14, 75:18, 75:21, 76:1, 76:12, 76:14, 76:17, 76:21, 76:24, 77:3, 77:4, 77:15, 78:1, 78:25, 79:1, 79:5, 79:15, 79:22, 79:23, 80:3, 80:9, 80:14, 80:20, 81:3, 81:9, 81:15, 81:16, 81:17, 81:18, 81:25, 82:7, 82:9, 82:11, 82:12, 82:13, 82:14, 82:18, 82:19, 82:23, 82:25, 83:2, 83:9, 83:11, 83:24, 84:14,

84:21, 84:25, 85:9, 85:17, 85:19, 85:22, 85:25, 86:5, 86:12, 86:13, 86:15, 86:16, 86:21, 87:1, 87:16, 87:21, 87:25, 88:17, 88:19, 88:23, 89:1, 89:3, 89:7, 89:12, 89:14, 89:15, 89:18, 90:7, 90:11, 90:14, 90:17, 90:19, 91:8, 91:12, 91:16, 91:20, 91:25, 92:3, 92:4, 92:12, 92:17, 92:19, 92:20, 92:21, 93:2, 93:5, 93:6, 93:10, 93:12, 93:13, 93:14, 94:1, 94:2, 94:3, 94:4, 94:7, 94:10, 94:11, 94:16, 94:17, 94:18, 94:20, 94:21, 95:2, 95:3, 95:13, 95:14, 95:16, 95:19, 95:22, 95:25, 96:1, 96:5, 96:6, 96:8, 96:13, 96:15, 96:18, 96:19, 96:21, 96:24, 96:25, 97:2, 97:7, 97:8, 97:11, 97:13, 97:18, 97:25, 98:5, 98:19, 98:20, 98:23, 99:2, 99:9, 99:12, 99:13, 99:14, 99:19, 99:22, 99:24, 100:1, 100:2, 100:3, 100:4, 100:9, 100:15, 100:18, 100:19, 100:21, 100:23, 101:1, 101:4, 101:9, 101:10, 101:11, 101:15, 101:18, 102:5, 102:7, 102:12, 102:15, 103:4, 103:6, 103:25, 104:4, 104:5, 104:7, 104:18, 104:19, 105:1, 105:4, 105:11, 105:12, 105:13, 105:14, 105:16, 105:23, 106:4, 106:9, 106:15, 106:16, 106:19, 107:1, 107:2, 107:10, 108:10, 108:12, 108:19, 108:20, 109:1, 109:3, 109:5, 109:12, 109:13, 109:15, 109:17, 109:22, 109:23, 109:24, 109:25, 110:2, 110:4, 110:10, 110:12, 110:13, 110:15, 110:18, 110:19, 110:25, 111:2, 111:23, 112:1, 112:7, 112:25, 113:3, 113:6, 113:9, 113:13, 113:14, 113:15, 113:18, 113:25, 114:1, 114:2, 114:18, 115:7, 115:10, 115:11, 115:18, 116:1, 116:4, 116:9, 116:14, 116:18, 116:19, 116:24, 117:20, 118:1, 118:9, 118:10, 118:18, 119:9, 119:13, 119:21, 119:22, 120:2, 120:9, 120:10,

| ```120:18, 120:19, 120:22, 120:23, 120:24, 121:1, 121:3, 121:6, 121:14, 121:15, 121:17, 121:25, 122:10, 122:13, 122:20, 122:21, 122:22, 122:23, 123:6, 123:19, 124:1, 124:3, 124:7, 124:21, 124:23, 125:3, 125:4, 125:5, 125:12, 125:23, 126:2, 126:8, 126:12, 126:14, 127:3, 127:4, 127:5, 127:9, 127:12, 127:15, 128:10, 128:11 today [13] - 35:18, 41:6, 46:7, 47:4, 56:5, 65:23, 69:9, 83:16, 83:20, 93:1, 93:10, 95:14, 101:12 together [10]-24:14, 24:18, 25:9, 25:12, 63:12, 63:23, 64:14, 84:21, 106:25, 123:6 told [2] - 103:9, 123:5 tomorrow [1] - 102:7 tonight [17] - 7:7, 7:21, 22:25, 45:23, 46:5, 48:8, 59:1, 59:14, 61:19, 62:3, 87:19, 87:21, 117:9, 119:22, 125:10, 126:5, 127:10 tonight's [1] - 86:2 too [8] - 24:10, 26:13, 30:8, 38:14, 63:2, 91:20, 92:21, 95:14 took [2] - 91:2, 123:3 TOOR [1] - 122:15 Toor [2]-114:22, 122:16 top [2] - 27:6, 56:18 top-down [1]-27:6 topic [2] - 9:5, 59:3 topic-focused [1] - 9:5 topics [1] - 7:18 total [3] - 11:9, 52:13, 85:21 totally \({ }_{[1]}-119: 19\) touch [1]-64:22 tough [1] - 125:3 Towaki [2] - 98:24, 101:14 toward [1] - 50:5 towards [3]-28:8, 95:12, 116:21 town [4] - 56:15, 102:2, 121:23, 127:1 \(\operatorname{track}[1]\) - 74:22 tradition [1] - 59:5 traditional [3] - 74:16, 75:1, 84:9 tragedy [1] - 17:9 transcription [1] - 128:8 transcripts [2]-7:2, 7:6 transitions [1] - 90:8``` | ```transparency [5] - 11:10, 16:11, 18:25, 93:5, \(93: 9\) transparent [2]-13:23, 16:8 transportation [1] - 78:11 treat [1]-45:7 tremendous [2]-59:15, 85:14 trends [2] - 53:12, 108:14 trial [1]-23:10 tricky [1] - 111:15 tried [1] - 39:24 trip [1] - 106:19 troubled [1] - 37:4 trucks [2]-99:8, 99:20 true [2] - 55:18, 112:24 truly [1] - 84:19 trust [3] - 67:4, 75:13, 75:15 trusts [1] - 18:16 try [4]-56:7, 72:13, 95:14, 124:7 trying [12]-24:10, 33:1, 33:3, 36:6, 57:14, 68:23, 70:25, 96:8, 118:9, 121:16, 124:1, 124:3 Tuesday [1] - 65:2 turn [2]-81:17, 81:20 turned [1] - 31:6 turnout [11]-6:3, 77:14, 77:17, 78:21, 81:9, 90:24, 92:18, 109:14, 109:20, 110:1, 110:23 turns [1] - 6:16 twelve [1] - 106:7 twenty [1] - 106:10 twenty-six [1] - 106:10 twin [1]-89:6 Twitter [3] - 6:17, 6:18, 27:15 two [23]-6:25, 10:20, 21:1, 32:24, 39:8, 39:17, 39:19, 44:5, 50:23, 51:15, 51:21, 56:18, 65:11, 65:25, 73:7, 92:3, 93:22, 99:23, 108:20, 112:3, 112:4, 120:12, 123:20 type [5] - 12:15, 25:22, 52:22, 56:11, 87:7 types [2] - 88:18, 126:24 \\ U \\ U.S [2] - 82:19, 101:15 \\ ultimate [1] - 85:2 \\ ultimately [1] - 5:21 \\ unacceptable [1] - 11:11 \\ unalienable [1] - 42:19 \\ unconstitutional [1] - 110:9 under [18]-11:16, 23:7, \\ 24:24, 25:19, 26:19, 29:20, 33:9, 33:15, 46:20, 46:23, 46:25, 47:3, 52:5, 54:16,``` |  | ```upon [3]-2:18, 28:1, 77:23 urban [1] - 115:17 Urban [1] - 99:5 urge [10] - 10:7, 12:19, 18:22, 19:2, 28:9, 47:24, 58:8, 97:7, 107:2, 116:23 urgent \([1]\) - 69:9 Us [3] - 50:2, 125:1, 125:15 us [18] - 3:12, 5:7, 5:18, 6:18, 11:16, 17:17, 17:21, 22:18, 56:11, 77:10, 78:23, 93:1, 95:3, 109:19, 116:15, 120:9, 127:12 Use [1] - 31:23 use [17]-2:14, 3:12, 14:7, 15:16, 19:4, 31:21, 44:14, 44:22, 47:25, 58:3, 58:16, 79:22, 93:9, 96:24, 96:25, 101:16, 120:1 used [5] - 41:21, 97:1, 106:20, 108:20, \(123: 18\) useful [2]-55:15, 118:19 using \([5]\) - 31:24, 31:25, 45:3, 58:2, 106:18 usually [1] - 56:23 utilize [2] - 94:2, 94:10``` $\qquad$ ```NoneNone ``` |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |

109:25, 113:23, 118:18, 119:18, 124:20, 124:24
veteran [1]-101:15
veterans [1]-102:4
vetting [1] - 85:1
viable [1] - 118:17
Vice [4] - 1:15, 2:11, 62:1, 62:2
vice [1] - 62:6
VICE [1] - 2:1
victims [1] - 17:23
video [1] - 101:20
videos [2]-6:24, 7:4
view [4] - 94:14, 114:17,
114:18, 116:21
viewed [1] - 108:9
views [3]-33:14, 107:10,
116:15
violated [1] - 69:14
violation [1] - 68:21
virtue [1] - 115:16
visa [1] - 37:6
vital [3]-76:1, 115:22,
116:20
vocally [1] - 43:12
voice [8] - 36:21, 79:13, 82:1, 83:2, 83:9, 116:4, 116:16, 120:10
voiceless [1] - 83:10 voices [6]-29:25, 62:24, 65:10, 78:14, 79:16, 99:9
voluntary [1] - 68:4
volunteer [10]-70:20, 71:3,
72:2, 73:15, 73:16, 73:21, 83:21, 84:19, 85:16, 124:25
volunteers [1]-71:1
vote [48]-5:21, 22:11, 34:9, 40:21, 40:23, 41:2, 41:3, 41:10, 41:11, 43:2, 44:9, 47:19, 51:12, 53:15, 55:16, 65:8, 72:25, 75:21, 79:15, 82:17, 82:19, 82:21, 82:23, 85:2, 88:7, 89:1, 89:5, 91:21, 92:13, 92:19, 105:12, 105:13, 106:17, 108:17, 110:2, 110:12, 112:8, 112:22, 112:24, 113:1, 113:2, 114:19, 126:13, 127:17
voted [7]-41:8, 75:9, 81:22, 98:2, 108:3, 108:16
voter [26] - 46:10, 46:12, 46:13, 53:12, 53:24, 61:11, 65:11, 65:18, 74:24, 77:4, 77:14, 81:9, 82:5, 82:6, 90:20, 90:24, 108:15, 108:22, 108:24, 109:8, 109:14, 109:25, 112:15, 113:5, 113:9

Voters [3]-52:24, 53:8, 98:7
voters [50] - 5:10, 10:8, 12:22, 40:22, 41:23, 44:9, 44:17, 45:4, 45:7, 45:13, 46:8, 46:20, 46:22, 46:24, 46:25, 47:2, 47:3, 47:5, 47:6, 51:10, 51:12, 51:15, 52:19, 55:15, 56:22, 57:7, 58:15, 59:25, 60:16, 61:17, 61:21, 61:22, 63:5, 69:6, 69:25, 73:1, 77:15, 79:7, 81:1, 81:4, 81:12, 89:24, 91:19, 101:7, 106:15, 108:20, 108:21
voters' [1] - 47:23
votes [1] - 80:24
Voting [2] - 4:10, 58:14
voting [43]-4:11, 34:10, 41:10, 44:22, 45:1, 45:4, 45:5, 45:10, 47:14, 47:17, 48:2, 48:11, 51:6, 51:7, 51:17, 57:1, 57:13, 57:25, 58:9, 59:17, 65:1, 65:10, 77:23, 78:16, 78:17, 81:2, 81:6, 84:7, 84:9, 89:8, 89:11, 92:17, 92:22, 97:5, 97:15, 105:7, 106:5, 106:6, 106:12, 106:17, 106:23, 111:16
voucher [1] - 126:9
vouchers [4]-29:7, 66:3, 96:20, 96:24
vulnerable [1] - 51:11

| $\mathbf{W}$ |
| :--- |
| wage $[1]-100: 14$ |
| wait $[2]-39: 24,106: 15$ |
| waiting $[1]-12: 25$ |
| waiver $[1]-118: 20$ |
| wake $[2]-17: 19,109: 21$ |
| walked $[1]-123: 4$ |
| walking [2] - 123:8, 124:13 |
| Wall $[1]-20: 4$ |
| want $[34]-4: 8,7: 9,7: 14$, |
| $14: 6,21: 17,23: 11,31: 11$, |
| $32: 20,32: 24,33: 4,38: 19$, |
| $38: 20,57: 12,59: 12,59: 22$, |
| $61: 7,67: 12,74: 19,74: 21$, |

75:11, 76:21, 82:23, 86:13, 89:12, 90:17, 91:7, 95:16, 95:22, 98:20, 108:12, 110:2, 110:12, 110:19, 114:18
wanted [12]-22:21, 25:24, 32:6, 58:16, 58:18, 59:2, 60:10, 95:13, 98:19, 104:7, 119:22, 120:10
wants [2]-66:16, 75:13
was [67]-2:19, 2:23, 2:25,

3:1, 10:19, 10:21, 16:18, 22:22, 24:16, 24:17, 24:21, 25:7, 25:20, 25:21, 26:8, 28:8, 33:9, 33:22, 33:25, 34:2, 34:4, 37:6, 37:16, 37:17, 38:1, 45:25, 46:15, 49:25, 53:1, 53:2, 53:4, 53:6, 53:15, 54:20, 58:21, 59:12, 60:20, 60:21, 69:23, 71:16, 71:17, 75:4, 81:2, 82:20, 86:17, 86:18, 86:19, 87:6, 89:4, 89:9, 95:25, 97:20, 97:24, 98:1, 101:18, 102:6, 106:20, 108:3, 108:5, 117:20, 120:7,
121:23, 122:4, 123:6,
123:23, 124:13, 127:22
Washington [2]-66:1, 106:11
wasn't [2] - 88:12, 108:4
waste [1] - 91:12
watched [1]-95:5
water [2]-81:23, 81:24
watering $[1]-12: 2$
way [34]-15:8, 35:4, 38:10, 39:3, 42:3, 47:20, 52:18, 56:19, 57:5, 58:8, 63:4, 68:6, 68:25, 70:1, 74:22, 77:12, 81:8, 81:18, 86:5, 91:12, 94:6, 94:14, 94:22, 111:15, 111:18, 114:11, 115:4, 116:9, 118:18, 119:9, 121:10, 123:17, 124:9, 128:12
ways [8]-22:9, 41:18, 52:9, 67:24, 77:9, 81:16, 118:13
we [256]-2:1, 2:6, 3:1, 3:18, 4:14, 4:20, 5:12, 5:20, 5:25, 6:4, 6:5, 6:17, 6:21, 6:24, 7:3, 7:8, 7:9, 7:11, 7:14, 8:4, 8:16, 8:19, 8:21, 8:25, 9:3, 9:6, 9:14, 9:18, 10:3, 10:5, 10:7, 10:11, 11:16, 11:17, 12:11, 12:17, 12:19, 12:24, 13:9, 13:13, 13:19, 13:23, 14:11, 14:16, 14:20, 14:22, 14:23, 15:5, 15:7, 15:23, 16:24, 17:1, 17:10, 17:11, 17:12, 17:15, 18:4, 18:10, 18:18, 18:22, 19:2, 19:6, 19:11, 19:19, 22:3, 22:18, 22:20, 24:3, 25:22, 25:24, 25:25, 26:2, 26:5, 26:12, 26:13, 26:24, 28:16, 28:21, 28:24, 29:8, 29:14, 29:17, 29:25, 30:2, 30:8, 31:24, 31:25, 32:20, 34:5, 34:8, 35:7, 35:16, $36: 12,37: 9,37: 13,38: 22$, $38: 23,38: 25,40: 3,40: 4$,

40:22, 41:5, 41:24, 42:21, 44:14, 47:6, 47:13, 48:9, 48:10, 48:16, 49:1, 49:4, 49:15, 49:23, 50:4, 50:22, 50:25, 51:1, 51:6, 51:10, 54:8, 54:25, 55:3, 55:5, 55:6, 55:9, 55:10, 55:17, 55:19, 56:1, 57:3, 58:3, 58:24, 58:25, 59:1, 60:13, 60:15, 62:13, 62:18, 63:21, 64:24, 65:23, 68:19, 70:4, 70:23, 71:13, 71:15, 71:19, 71:22, 71:23, 71:24, 72:6, 72:12, 72:22, 72:23, 73:3, 73:4, 73:15, 73:16, 74:2, 74:20, 74:23, 75:7, 75:10, 75:14, 75:16, 76:11, 76:15, 78:22, 81:7, 84:14, 85:6, 85:20, 86:15, 86:25, 88:3, 88:4, 89:12, 89:13, 89:14, 89:17, 89:18, 89:22, 89:23, 90:14, 93:8, 93:19, 94:12, 94:14, 94:15, 94:19, 94:22, 98:20, 98:21, 98:23, 99:9, 101:2, 101:22, 104:16, 105:24, 106:12, 106:22, 107:22, 107:25, 108:1, 108:12, 108:18, 108:20, 108:21, 109:1, 109:4, 110:8, 110:10, 111:17, 112:4, 114:2, 114:12, 114:15, 114:23, 115:2, 115:3, 115:17, 115:24, 115:25, 116:2, 116:4, 116:8, 116:12, 116:15, 116:17, 116:23, 118:10, 119:12, 119:14, 121:19, 123:4, 123:5, 123:12, 123:24, 123:25, 124:1, 124:21, 125:10, 125:14, 125:15, 126:5, 126:6, 127:13
We [1]-93:4
we'd [1] - 15:25
we've [2] - 6:16, 54:7
weakened [1] - 27:22
wealth [2]-118:1, 118:5
wealthy [3]-19:9, 28:7, 125:14
website $[3]-6: 8,7: 5,30: 13$
Wednesday [1] - 120:20
week [2]-53:9, 90:25 weeknight ${ }_{[1]}-6: 2$ weeks [2]-51:16, 102:14
Weiser [2] - 4:5, 98:18
WEISER [13]-1:19, 4:5,
33:13, 34:18, 51:21, 52:23, 54:2, 54:17, 70:8, 72:14, 111:4, 112:10, $113: 8$
welcome $[4]-2: 1,2: 10,8: 2$,



