

Testimony of Carlos A. Ortiz
New York City Department of Consumer and Worker Protection

Before the Committee on Consumer and Worker Protection
Hearing on Introduction 518

April 9, 2026

Introduction

Good morning, Chair Epstein, and members of the Committee on Consumer and Worker Protection. My name is Carlos Ortiz, and I am Chief of Staff and Deputy Commissioner of External Affairs at the Department of Consumer and Worker Protection. I am joined by our General Counsel, Michael Tiger, and Director of Litigation in our Office of Labor and Policy Standards, Emily Hoffman. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before the Committee today on Introduction 518.

Protecting New Yorkers

The NYC Department of Consumer and Worker Protection (DCWP) is the nation's leading municipal enforcement agency charged with delivering economic justice. DCWP leverages its authority to bring New Yorkers real economic relief and protect them from predatory, deceptive, and unfair practices that violate their rights as consumers and workers. This includes pioneering cutting-edge protections, such as the City's Consumer Protection Law, Protected Time Off Law, Fair Workweek Law, and Delivery Worker Laws, including the Minimum Pay Rate for delivery workers. Through licensing more than 45,000 businesses in over 45 industries, DCWP ensures fair competition and a level playing field for responsible small businesses that are integral to New York City's vibrant communities. DCWP also provides essential services such as free tax preparation and financial counseling to ensure New Yorkers keep more of what they earn and can plan for their futures. DCWP is committed to making sure New York City is a fairer, more affordable place to live.

Championing Economic Justice

Under Mayor Mamdani and Commissioner Levine, DCWP has built upon our historic track of success to go even further, and take on the challenge of delivering economic justice to New Yorkers. From expanding the minimum pay rate to grocery delivery workers, to litigating against predatory corporate entities, to adopting new protections against junk fees and other consumer traps, our fight on behalf of New Yorkers' economic lives has been relentless. Last year, we delivered a record-breaking \$44.4 million in restitution to more than 24,000 workers through our enforcement of cornerstone New York City workplace laws, such as the Fair Workweek Law, Protected Time Off, Delivery Worker Laws, and more. So far in 2026, we have already secured more than \$9.3 million for New Yorkers in restitution. That represents nearly \$100,000 back to New Yorkers per day since the start of the Administration. This is real economic relief for New Yorkers at a time when affordability is a central issue in all of our lives. And, we take our crucial role of delivering economic justice with great pride and responsibility. To corporations or companies that shirk their legal obligations to exploit New Yorkers, our message is clear – you will be held accountable. As the Mamdani Administration moves forward with an ambitious vision for economic justice, we will continue to implement and enforce vital protections for New Yorkers.

Introduction 518

Turning to today's legislation, Introduction 518 requires operators of certain warehouses and storage facilities from which goods are delivered to consumers in the city to obtain a business license from DCWP. This bill also

provides for worker remedies when companies do not comply, through administrative enforcement and a private right of action.

DCWP supports Introduction 518. In the last decade, last-mile facility jobs have grown significantly in New York City, and companies in this space are benefiting from record profits. However, protections for workers at last-mile facilities have lagged behind other cutting-edge worker protections establishing fairness and stability. Last-mile facilities frequently subcontract much of their core delivery work instead of hiring their own employees to do the work. This model externalizes costs, as well as liabilities, which can lead to labor violations and the exploitation of workers in unsafe working environments. In other industries, we have seen how the subcontracting model shields the “parent company” from liability. In those spaces, DCWP has supported efforts to eliminate subcontracting, such as through the Safe Hotels Act. Even though last-mile facilities subcontract work, they still maintain significant control of workers’ schedules, workflow and lives, often times pressuring workers to reach unreasonable quotas without taking responsibility for any subsequent issues that arise. The “parent companies” are therefore the root problem and must be held accountable for any exploitation of workers or violations of the law. While we have concerns with certain provisions of the bill, ultimately, we believe this bill will empower the agency to address these core economic justice issues on behalf of thousands of workers. We look forward to working with the Council for passage of this legislation.

Conclusion

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before the committee on today’s legislation. As always, we are eager to partner with the Council on legislation to improve protections for workers, and prioritize economic justice in our city. I welcome any questions you may have for further discussion.