



**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE**  
Michelle Morse, MD, MPH  
*Acting Commissioner*

**Testimony**

of

**Corinne Schiff**  
**Deputy Commissioner of Environmental Health**  
**New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene**

before the

**New York City Council**  
**Committee on Health**

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Good afternoon, Chair Schulman and members of the Health Committee. I am Corinne Schiff, Deputy Commissioner for Environmental Health at the NYC Health Department. On behalf of Acting Commissioner Dr. Michelle Morse, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I am joined by Daniel Pollak, First Deputy Commissioner for the Office of Labor Relations, who can answer questions on Preconsidered Introduction 161.

The NYC Health Department is charged with protecting and promoting the health of all New Yorkers. One of our responsibilities is oversight of child care programs. The Department regulates child care centers—programs that serve children under age six in stand-alone commercial locations—and school-based child care programs—which serve children age three to five as part of an ongoing school. New York State regulates home-based child care—which serves children six weeks to 12 years old in a residential setting—and school-age child care—which operates in non-residential settings to care for children in school, ages five to 13, after school and during school breaks. The NYC Health Department holds a contract with New York State to issue licenses to the state-regulated programs, process background clearances, and conduct inspections and report findings to the New York State Office of Children and Family Services, the state agency that makes enforcement and other regulatory decisions.

Turning to the legislation under consideration today, Preconsidered Introduction 162 says that where the Health Code requires licenses, approvals, or permits from other agencies, that the Health Code specify what is needed. Among many types of licenses and permits, the NYC Health Department issues permits to operate a child care center, and based on conversations with Council and the previous hearing, our understanding is that the bill is meant to address child care permits. The Health Code already sets out requirements to obtain a child care permit, including the requirement for other agency approvals. The NYC Health Department provides information, including guidance documents—such as a step-by-step guide to apply to locate on an upper floor—required orientation sessions, and ongoing technical assistance, to help those in the permitting process meet those requirements.

We appreciate what we believe is the intent of the bill, which is to ensure that applicants for a child care center permit know exactly what is required, including the order in which materials need to be submitted and when other city or state agency permits or approvals are required. We aim to make the permitting process clear and straightforward but can always improve. The Department believes that the bill as written does not directly address this concern and is overly broad. We look forward to discussing the bill language with Council to ensure that it addresses the intent and desired scope in order to assist child care providers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My colleague and I are happy to take your questions.