

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON RECOVERY AND RESILIENCY,
JOINTLY WITH COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

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February 27, 2014

Start: 10:10 a.m.

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HELD AT: Carey Gardens Community Center
2315 Surf Avenue, Brooklyn, NY

B E F O R E:

MARK TREYGER
Chairperson
RITCHIE J. TORRES
Co-Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Rosie Mendez
Margaret S. Chin
Donovan J. Richards
Carlos Menchaca
Steven Matteo
Brad S. Lander
Laurie A. Cumbo
James G. Van Bramer
Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Ilma Joyner
President
O'Dwyer Houses Tenants' Association

Greg Lloyd
Teamsters Local 237

Shirley Aikens
President
Carey Gardens Houses Tenants' Association

Ann Valdez
Community Voices Heard

Raymond A. Ribeiro
Executive Vice President for
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New York City Housing Authority

Carlos Laboy-Diaz
Executive Vice President for Operations
New York City Housing Authority

Ed Cosby
Coney Island Business Owner

Sheryl Braxton
Red Hook Houses Resident

Nathalie Alegre
Organizer
ALIGN/The Alliance for a Greater New York

Alissa Pacarro
Red Hook Houses Resident

Judith Goldiner
Attorney-in-Charge
Civil Law Reform Unit
Legal Aid Society

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Martin Levine
Adjunct Professor
Building Performance Lab
City University of New York (CUNY)

Sheila Smalls
O'Dwyer Gardens Resident

Deborah Franklin-Reed
Resident Leader
Coney Island Houses.

Robert Swagger

Joel Kupferman
New York Environmental Law and Justice
Project

Wanda Feliciano
Resident Association President
Unity Tower

Deborah Carter
Resident Association President
Gravesend Houses

Reginald Bowman
President
Citywide Council of Presidents
New York City Housing Authority

Evangeline Hugh
New York City Housing Authority Resident

Evangeline Byers
Carey Gardens Resident

[background comments]

MALE VOICE: Ladies and gentlemen, we're gonna start in a little bit. If you'd like to testify today, please register with Howard; his hand is up in the back of the room, which is towards the entrance of this room. If you'd like to testify, you do need to fill out a form and you can do that with Howard, with his hand up in the back of the room. Thank you very much.

[pause]

[background comments]

MALE VOICE: Good morning ladies and gentlemen; may I have your attention, please? Quiet please; may I have your attention? Before we start, make sure that any electronic [background comments] devices that you may have brought with you today are set either to vibration; if you don't have that feature, please turn the audio off. Should you get a call, please exit the building and take your call outside so that we don't disturb the hearing. If you need any help or any assistance, just try to get the attention of one of our staff people or get my attention and I'll try to answer your questions to

the best of our ability. Thank you so much for your cooperation and enjoy the meeting today. Thank you.

[gavel]

MALE VOICE: Quiet please.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: This hearing is coming to order. Good morning and welcome everyone to this Joint Hearing of the Committee on Public Housing and the Committee on Recovery and Resiliency. I am Council Member Ritchie Torres and I chair the Committee on Public Housing and I'm joined today by Council Member Treyger, the Chair of the Committee on Recovery and Resiliency, along with Council Member Mendez, Councilwoman Cumbo, Council Member Chin, Council Member Richards, Council Member Menchaca and Council Member Matteo and Council Member... oh, and Council Member Lander.

Before I begin, I would just like to note that everyone here today will be able to look back and say they part of history. Today's hearing will be the very first hearing of the Committee on Public Housing to be held in Public Housing [applause] and I feel this is an important moment for us to recognize. We in government so often ask you to come to us; now it's time for us to come to you. [applause]

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2 Sixteen months ago our city was struck by
3 the worst natural disaster in its history. Hurricane
4 Sandy took the lives of 43 New Yorkers, damaged
5 thousands of homes and businesses and left millions
6 of people without basic services, like electricity,
7 heat and hot water. As everyone here knows today,
8 Sandy did not spare NYCHA. Over 400 NYCHA buildings
9 were damaged by the storm and over 80,000 residents
10 were affected. Many of you here today suffered
11 during Sandy and many of you are suffering still.

12 In the days and weeks that followed the
13 storm NYCHA relied on temporary electrical generators
14 and temporary mobile boilers to provide power, heat
15 and hot water to many of their buildings. The
16 temporary generators are gone, but the temporary
17 boilers remain. NYCHA tells us that there are right
18 now 26 mobile boilers in 16 different developments,
19 including this one. NYCHA also tells us that these
20 temporary boilers aren't so temporary; they're going
21 to be around for a long time and what we wanna know
22 is why.

23 Hurricane Sandy happened over a year ago
24 and yet in that time NYCHA seems to have made very
25 little progress toward replacing the permanent boiler

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2 systems; in fact, NYCHA has more temporary boilers
3 now than it did right after the storm. The way NYCHA
4 tells it, they have a three-part problem. First they
5 say they can't replace the damaged boilers until they
6 make a resiliency plan for the new boilers; that
7 means a plan to protect those new boilers from
8 flooding and storms and other disasters. Second,
9 NYCHA says that they can't make a resiliency plan
10 until they know how much funding they'll be getting
11 from FEMA, HUD and their private insurers. Third,
12 NYCHA says that it can't lock in funding until they
13 have a resiliency plan.

14 Now think about that for a second. NYCHA
15 is saying that they can't make plans without funding
16 and they can't get funding without plans. If that's
17 really the case, then what we have here is an
18 unresolvable situation, a catch 22; I for one refuse
19 to accept that. I believe that there must be some
20 say to break this apparent log jam and I think here
21 and now NYCHA needs to give us a better, clearer
22 explanation of why exactly it's taking so long to
23 replace these boilers. If NYCHA needs a resiliency
24 plan, then what exactly are they doing to make that
25 plan? If NYCHA needs funding, then what exactly are

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2 they doing to get that funding? The residents
3 relying on these temporary boilers for heat and hot
4 water deserve real answers and today in Coney Island
5 that's what we're here to get.

6 At this time I'd like to turn things over
7 to Chair Treyger for his opening remarks and I wanna
8 thank him for hosting us in his district.

9 [applause]

10 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you Chair
11 Torres and thank you to my colleagues in the Council
12 for being here today in Coney Island and I would like
13 to also acknowledge and thank -- she'll be here later
14 -- the Speaker of the New York City Council, Melissa
15 Mark-Viverito, who is very -- yes, let's give her
16 [applause] a round of applause as well -- she was
17 very gracious enough to help us get this hearing here
18 today; I'm truly grateful for that.

19 Good morning; my name is Councilman Mark
20 Treyger; I am Chair of the City Council's Committee
21 on Recovery and Resiliency. First, allow me to
22 welcome you all to this joint hearing on temporary
23 boilers in NYCHA developments. I'd like to point out
24 that mine is a new committee and this is our first
25 ever hearing. The Speaker, again, as was mentioned

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2 before, will be here a little later and this Council
3 created this committee to make sure that we as a body
4 maintain a hands-on focused role in recovery efforts
5 from Sandy and in building a stronger city that is
6 better prepared for future storms and other natural
7 disasters.

8 This hearing is also historic because it
9 is in a community where the problem we're talking
10 about still exists. My message has been clear; Coney
11 Island doesn't have to go to City Hall to be heard;
12 City Hall is here in Coney Island to hear from you
13 directly. [applause, cheers]

14 Sandy hit the entire city hard, but some
15 neighborhood really got the worse of it and
16 practically almost no neighborhood, although many
17 have suffered, was hit harder than here in Coney
18 Island. Many people's homes and apartments were
19 flooded out, businesses were ruined, churches and
20 other vital institutions were damaged or even
21 destroyed, and public housing suffered some of the
22 worst damage; many buildings lost electricity and
23 heat and hot water for extended periods and the use
24 of temporary boilers which NYCHA pulled in from
25 around the country to restart heat and hot water is

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2 more extensive here than in any other neighborhood in
3 our city. So today we are holding this hearing
4 exactly where it should be.

5 I'd also like to point out that literally
6 my first week in office, the first snowstorm -- seems
7 like there have been many snowstorms -- but the first
8 snowstorm in January we lost heat and hot water at
9 O'Dwyer Houses, home to hundreds and hundreds of
10 families and when I knocked on doors with my staff,
11 we saw seniors, families, children; no heat, no hot
12 water, using their ovens as sources of heat, which we
13 know is extremely dangerous and that's why I take
14 this hearing and I take this issue extremely
15 seriously and I am so grateful to Chair Torres for
16 agreeing to hold this hearing here, directly where
17 this incident occurred.

18 Now the word temporary isn't very
19 specific, but my goodness, a year-and-a-half is just
20 way too long. Maybe we could live with that
21 timeframe if it represented the total time that NYCHA
22 used these boilers, but it is now; in fact, there is
23 no end in sight for these boilers, no plan to replace
24 them except with other different temporary boilers,
25 no money allocated to end their use and nothing but

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2 confusion and inaction about how to go forward.
3 Meanwhile, these boilers, in their temporary housing,
4 are an eyesore; they are loud, they take up space
5 that could be better used and they fail too often,
6 depriving the folks who live in these developments
7 once again of heat and hot water all too often.

8 I understand that there seems to be
9 layers upon layers of bureaucracy preventing these
10 temporary boilers from being replaced not just at the
11 city level, but also at the state and federal levels;
12 I understand that getting and using the funding for
13 Sandy recovery is complicated, but that just can't be
14 an ongoing excuse to do nothing about this problem;
15 we have to rebuild. [applause] We have to rebuild
16 so that people's lives can return to normal and
17 safety and we've got to prepare for the next storm to
18 make sure that we don't suffer all this damage the
19 next time a storm hits us.

20 So today I hope we can jumpstart that
21 process and begin to move forward on this issue. I
22 look forward to the testimony here today, but
23 specifically I am looking today for a concrete plan
24 of action. I'd like to turn it over now to Chair
25 Torres to call the first panel.

[applause]

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Actually, before we proceed to the panel, there are a number of council members here whose public housing developments were hit hard by Hurricane Sandy and I wanna give those council members an opportunity to briefly share their experiences; I'll start with Council Member Carlos Menchaca.

[applause]

COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Thank you Chairman Torres and Chairman Treyger and I wanna thank my colleagues here today who are here with our mission, which our mission is very clear today, as you've heard; we're here to join in partnership with you, the community, to hear your stories, to hear the impacts that you're facing on a daily basis. These temporary boilers have been such a hindrance to our recovery and our resiliency in our houses.

As you've heard today, we're gonna be hearing from NYCHA and the number one thing is clear -- in this new administration for the City Council we've created this new committee to review all the multiple forces that we need to pull together to recover after Sandy. So what we're here to do is

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2 also send the message of partnership, partnership
3 with our community and partnership with NYCHA, to
4 make sure that we're working together to solve these
5 very complicated issues. And so I wanna thank Red
6 Hook; Red Hook is here in full force -- where are my
7 Red Hook folks? Raise your hands... [cheers, applause]
8 thank you so much for coming. I wanna thank the Red
9 Hook Initiative, who helped organize transportation
10 to get folks here -- the message is clear, just by
11 looking around in this room, the energy is high, the
12 hopes are high and now we need to translate that hope
13 into some action, so I'm hoping to hear some really
14 good things from NYCHA, but more important, I wanna
15 hear from you, the NYCHA residents, about how this is
16 affecting you and how we're gonna move forward.
17 Thank you.

18 [applause]

19 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Council Member
20 Richards, do you have anything to say?

21 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Thank you.
22 First off I would like to thank Council Members
23 Treyger and Torres for their leadership on this
24 issue; it is an honor to be here in Coney Island; no,
25 I have never been to Coney Island before, but I

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2 represent the sixth borough in New York City, the
3 Rockaways, and we certainly still have the many
4 issues that my brethren and sisters here in Coney
5 Island are having and that is the issue of these
6 temporary boilers.

7 Now I wanna be very clear that there were
8 heat and hot water issues before temporary boilers
9 came along as well, and I'm happy today that we are
10 finally really taking a look at this issue. Now you
11 know, I'm not gonna go on and on, because I think
12 that council members have said pretty much what I
13 wanna hear today and certainly the direction I think
14 we should go in, but if NYCHA just treated their
15 residents as if they were their children, as if they
16 were their brothers or sisters or mothers and
17 fathers, we would not be here today and it is
18 unfortunate that residents in the Rockaways still are
19 enduring, just up until a few days ago, heat and hot
20 water issues and I wanna hear from NYCHA today a
21 concrete plan on how they are really going to deal
22 with this issue. It is not good enough for us to sit
23 here and speak about we're waiting for federal money;
24 state money; because we know it's not gonna come in a
25 timely fashion. So I would say to NYCHA, we wanna

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2 hear concrete plans on what you're going to do
3 without... let's assume that the federal dollars are
4 not coming; what are we gonna do about this issue?
5 So thank you guys for your leadership once again and
6 I look forward to hearing from NYCHA. Thank you.

7 [applause]

8 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Council Member
9 Mendez.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Thank you Chair
11 Torres and Chair Treyger. I get a twofer today; I'm
12 part of both committees. So but thank you for having
13 us here and I wanna say how proud I am to be a member
14 of both committees and Chair Torres, I know you're
15 gonna do an incredible job on this committee; I look
16 forward to working with you as we all work to make
17 public housing better in this city.

18 My district was completely in the
19 blackout zone and many of my buildings were flooded,
20 including my own. There were two buildings... there
21 are two buildings currently that are on temporary
22 boilers in my district -- excuse me, two
23 developments, small buildings; one is 54 units and
24 the other one is 95 units. And just to tell you the
25 complexity of what we also suffered in Manhattan --

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2 everybody has their own stories -- once the waters
3 receded, the boilers in these two developments were
4 found unattached in a separate room in the basement;
5 the force of the water lifted the boiler and took it
6 somewhere else, so this is the extent of the damage
7 that we're dealing with in my two developments. I
8 know to make repairs, just from Sandy, is half-a-
9 million in one building and a million in another, but
10 to make those two, and by, you know, small
11 developments, to make them resilient would cost... the
12 half-a-million would go to \$1.7 million and the \$1
13 million would go to \$5.5 million. So we are talking
14 about a lot of need, multiply that by bigger
15 developments; multiply that by here in Coney Island
16 where you had not just salt water damage and water
17 damage; you had sand in your buildings.

18 The solution is not easy, it's gonna be a
19 long road. In one of my particular buildings I need
20 to raise the fact that the temporary boiler is
21 bringing ancillary problems. The residents of that
22 building are getting incredible Con Ed bills; unclear
23 if it's related to the boiler, something we've talked
24 about. The other thing that we have to follow up on
25 -- and we have a meeting scheduled soon -- is rats.

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2 As a result of the temporary boiler and I believe
3 also an empty lot across the street, we have
4 incredible amounts of rats and they're crawling on
5 the temporary boiler, on the pipe that attaches to
6 the building and going into the building, so this is
7 creating additional problems to the residents there
8 and I don't know how widespread that may be
9 throughout the other developments, but is certainly
10 something I look forward to tackling as part of this
11 committee and thank you again Chairs for letting me
12 have this opportunity.

13 [applause]

14 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: In addition to
15 thanking our Speaker, I wanna thank one more person;
16 he's the Deputy Leader for Policy in the City Council
17 and it's his vision of open, transparent and
18 participatory government that's at the heart of
19 what's driving today's hearing. So ladies and
20 gentlemen, Brad Lander.

21 [applause]

22 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you Chair
23 Torres and Chair Treyger, your leadership in making
24 this happen and insisting that this be a first
25 hearing of both committees and moving this out here

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2 and doing the work with the support from the Speaker,
3 and I also wanna thank all the staff of the Council
4 who have... it's a lot of work to enable the Council to
5 have a hearing out in the field, so hats off to you
6 and to everybody who made this happen today.

7 I don't represent a Sandy-damaged
8 community with public housing, but at the time of
9 Sandy, Red Hook was not yet lucky enough to have
10 Council Member Carlos Menchaca representing it and so
11 I spent a lot of time down there with some of you and
12 I wanna remind a couple of things -- you know when
13 those mobile boilers finally rolled up, we viewed
14 them as heroes, as saviors, right; the communities
15 had been two weeks... three weeks without heat and
16 without hot water and you remember that it showed and
17 that it was very cold and that we felt it was not
18 fast enough even to get the temporary boilers in
19 place and so I remember seeing them come rolling into
20 Red Hook with great joy, because there was gonna be
21 heat in the buildings and I never would have thought
22 at that moment that we'd be here more than a year
23 later without a clear plan about how to transition
24 back to a permanent boiler system.

Now, we have to go from needing a short-term plan to a long-term plan, but what troubles me; why I'm so glad today's hearing is taking place, is that in that moment there was a real sense of urgency; obviously we had just had this enormous natural disaster and we were seeing a lot of each other, folks from NYCHA were out on the ground listening to a lot of complaints and a lot of anger and a lot of anxiety, but with a real powerful sense of urgency that something had to happen right then and we need to have that sense of urgency restored to a long-term solution. Once we don't have a moment of crisis it is hard to sustain the level of push that's needed to get a solution and we have to get back to that, we need a long-term solution, but we need that sense of urgency to move and push forward, so I'm glad we're here today, and we need that sense of urgency really for two reasons -- one, because we cannot let people continue to live in buildings powered by the boilers that aren't capable of doing the job in the freezing cold that cause the ancillary problems we're hearing, but look, we also need that sense of urgency because as much as it pains us, the sea is going to rise again at some point in the

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2 future and we therefore need a solution that can
3 withstand it and this is a moment when we are called
4 to pay attention because, you know, it's easy to
5 forget and say oh, that was a one-time event, we
6 don't have to look backwards, but we need a solution
7 that not only gets those buildings back powered, but
8 that address the challenges that our low-lying areas
9 are gonna face for the long term. So it's a hard
10 problem to solve, it's not an easy one, but we are
11 called to solve it and that's why I think it's so
12 important that we're here and so important that we're
13 doing this together in a way that includes the
14 Council and includes NYCHA's administration and that
15 fundamentally includes the residents of public
16 housing as part of developing that solution for the
17 long term, so thank you all for being here and thanks
18 to my colleagues.

19 [applause]

20 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And I wanna take the
21 opportunity to convey my deep appreciation to the New
22 York City Council staff and the NYCHA staff and the
23 residents here who had a role in organizing this
24 historic event, so I thank all of you. For those of
25 you who have been to past hearings, you'll notice

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2 that we are going to be doing things a little bit
3 differently today. First we're gonna start with a
4 panel of residents rather than with NYCHA. We feel
5 that hearing their experiences will humanize the
6 issue before us and second; all witnesses testifying
7 will be sworn in. With that said, I'd like to remind
8 everyone who would like to testify to please fill out
9 a card with the sergeant and we will now call up the
10 first panel.

11 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you Chair
12 Torres and just like to echo the remarks of... first of
13 all, thanking the Deputy Leader, Brad Lander, as well
14 for being a major role in remaking the face of local
15 government that's really addressing the needs of our
16 local communities and coming out here directly; it's
17 really, really great and I truly appreciate that, and
18 to the Council staff, the Committee staff and really
19 all the members here for coming out here to this
20 neighborhood, hearing directly from the people, I
21 truly, truly appreciate that.

22 The first panel I'd like to call up
23 includes Miss Ilma Joyner, who is the President of
24 O'Dwyer Houses Tenant Association, as well as Greg
25 Lloyd, Teamsters Local 237, Shirley Aikens, the

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2 President of Carey Gardens Tenant Association and Ann
3 Valdez from Community Voices Heard. And just a
4 reminder that all witnesses today will be sworn in.
5 We'll start with Miss Joyner.

6 JEFF BAKER: Hello, this is Jeff Baker;
7 I'm the acting Counsel to the Recovery and Resiliency
8 Committee. If I could have the witnesses please
9 raise your right hand. Do you swear to affirm or
10 tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the
11 truth in your testimony before this committee and to
12 respond honestly to council member questions?

13 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Miss Joyner, you
14 may proceed. Thank you.

15 ILMA JOYNER: [off mic]... [interpose]

16 MALE VOICE: This mic isn't working.

17 ILMA JOYNER: I would like to thank
18 Councilman Treyger and Councilman Torres for having
19 this panel discussion today and [interpose]

20 MALE VOICE: Is the mic...

21 ILMA JOYNER: ...opportunity to thank you
22 again, I would like to thank Councilman Treyger and
23 Councilman Torres for having this panel discussion
24 today. We... what I mean by we is the New York City
25 Housing Authority residents, have never had anything

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2 like this before, so we are very emphatic about
3 having our voices be heard and we are looking
4 forward, as said before, a concrete solution. And my
5 name is Ilma Joyner; I am the O'Dwyer Gardens
6 Resident Association President; there are three key
7 points that I was going to speak on and that was the
8 mobile boilers, and long-term energy plan. Because
9 some of the speakers have already touched on that, I
10 will just submit my paperwork. But I would like to
11 draw your attention to a situation that happened on
12 January 2nd in the O'Dwyer Gardens development.

13 That particular day the boilers went
14 down, there was no heat and hot water; I think it
15 happened like 2:00 in the morning and me being the
16 president, my responsibility at that point was to
17 call New York City Housing Authority Emergency
18 Services, which I did and I was told on that
19 particular day that they would be out soon, they were
20 aware of the problem 'cause they received lots of
21 calls from the tenants. However, on Friday the 3rd
22 there was still not hot water and no heat; it was one
23 of the coldest days of the year; I can't remember
24 exactly what the temperature was, but I do believe it
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2 was like 5 degrees or somewhere in the single digits
3 that day.

4 And then I called my resident association
5 CCOP chair and let her be aware of the problem and
6 she got on the phone and she made calls. On January
7 3rd, I believe, I received a call from Mr. Mark
8 Treyger that he was coming out to the development; he
9 was on the phone with the City from day one; my CCOP
10 Chair, Lillie Marshall, was on the phone from day
11 one; the only thing received from Housing Authority
12 was that they were aware of the problem. On January
13 3rd Mr. Treyger came to O'Dwyer Gardens and we walked
14 the development, we knocked on doors, the New York
15 City Housing Authority was with us; I can't remember
16 all the people that were there that day, but just to
17 go back a little bit, the day before that, I went
18 downstairs 'cause I wanted to know exactly what's
19 happening here, you know; I went downstairs and I
20 looked at the boilers and I seen this door that was
21 open; I went in the door -- well I asked permission -
22 - and there was a compressor; the compressor had
23 stopped working; that caused the lines to freeze, so
24 the boiler shut down; the lines were frozen. I
25 looked on a label; the label clearly stated that this

compressor would not work under 40 degrees. Now my next question was, why is it still here? The day that we walked the complex with Mr. Treyger I said to Mr. Treyger, "That's the building where the compressor is; they had it locked and a ladder up against the door." Mr. Treyger asked, "Well can we go in there?" We went in; he'd seen it; there was a heater at least maybe two feet long that they had in the ceiling trying to heat this particular room. They also had kerosene heaters and I said to Mr. Treyger, "They had kerosene heaters here last night; I don't see them, but there's boxes right there that says kerosene." Mr. Treyger asked the Housing Authority, "Well what is that?" "Oh, these are empty containers." "What was in 'em, 'cause this clearly states kerosene." They tried to allude to the question; they really didn't answer the question in full, but my thing was; how safe is that to have kerosene heaters to heat up a boiler? That was number one. If you knew that this compressor could not work under 40 degrees, why is it still therein the winter when you had the whole non-heating season to replace the compressor? Now and the answer to that was they literally piped from our boiler to a

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2 boiler at 2940, another complex. So now they say
3 this was gonna alleviate the problem; if our boiler
4 goes down, then it's gonna kick in at 2940. And my
5 question is, if both of the boilers go down; what's
6 gonna happen? Now we know that 2940 at least three
7 weeks ago was without heat and hot water again. This
8 morning when we got up, our radiators was one-third
9 heated and lukewarm in O'Dwyer Gardens, so it was
10 cold when I left my house this morning -- this is an
11 ongoing problem.

12 Another thing I want to say; even before
13 Hurricane Sandy, I think we need to look at how well
14 Housing Authority has been taking care of their
15 infrastructure. We've experienced this time and time
16 again. So this particular thing is not just
17 something that happened 'cause Sandy was here; we've
18 been without heat and hot water for years, we have
19 experienced this and I'm talking not only as a
20 resident association, but I'm a tenant and that's my
21 first thing of priority, I am a tenant, so I know
22 what I'm talking about, I know what I experience --
23 many days that we had to use our stoves to heat our
24 apartments, which is dangerous and I'm also concerned
25 [applause] about the health and safety of what's

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2 comin' out of these boilers when the smoke is goin'
3 into people's apartments and they're breathin' this
4 in; we don't get answers, Mr. Treyger, we don't get
5 answers, panel and I'm so happy today to be here to
6 see you here and see your concern and to help us get
7 answers. Having said that, I'm going to pull back
8 now, 'cause I'm very emotional about this because
9 when you see elderly people, children that can't go
10 to school because there's no heat and hot water and
11 it's too cold for them to even walk out of their
12 homes; it's cold in the homes and out of the home.
13 You know, we shouldn't have to live like this, you
14 know. So I'm gonna pull back now and let someone
15 else speak, but I had other things that I really
16 wanted to touch on but I will submit my statement to
17 you to look at. Thank you.

18 [applause]

19 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: We will save
20 questions till we hear from the entire panel, but
21 just for the record Miss Joyner, tell us your trade
22 by profession... [interpose]

23 ILMA JOYNER: I'm an electrician.

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: A retired
25 electrician, so you know what you're talking about

[applause] Miss Joyner. I'd like to call up next to speak, Greg Lloyd from Teamsters Local 237 please.

[applause]

GREG LLOYD: Thank you and my heart goes out to everyone affected by the heating situation here. I have a testimony here, but I'm not going to read it, because Chairman Torres touched on every issue I was going to speak about and I'm not gonna be redundant. However, what I want to say is that the Teamsters Local 237 will pledge to work with everyone, including the residents, the council members and the City, to lobby for funding for NYCHA. In the past we've been left out of the equation over the last eight years or so and we have not been privy to the budget needs of NYCHA until it was too late. We can be effective in Washington if we know what the problem is. Our motto is -- we could faster in a pack than with one person around our neck. That being said, I think what we need to find out from NYCHA is, how much do they need to fix this problem? We know we have a problem; what is the budget? What are we asking for? What's the ask; what would secure the boilers, have the boilers in a safe position if Hurricane Sandy or another hurricane comes along; how

1
2 much do we need to repair the problem? That's not
3 given to us; we know we have a problem, but when we
4 hear that -- well we need funding -- yes, we need
5 funding, but how much is the ask? Give us the total
6 budget. Thank you.

7 [applause]

8 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you. Thank
9 you Mr. Lloyd. Next we're gonna hear from Shirley
10 Aikens, who is the President of the Carey Gardens
11 Tenants' Association and I'm very grateful to you,
12 Miss Aikens, for hosting us here today in Carey
13 Gardens Community Center.

14 [applause, cheers]

15 SHIRLEY AIKENS: Thank you Councilman
16 Treyger; thank you for also answerin' my phone calls,
17 my emails, my texts; I really appreciate everything
18 that you have done for me and also my residents and
19 [applause] as well as the community here at Coney
20 Island; I wanna welcome you, your board and everyone
21 else here, you know I'm happy that we have this,
22 because a lot of the residents and also leaders, and
23 I am a tenant here at Carey Gardens; we need a lot of
24 answers.

At three of my buildings... I have three buildings -- 2946, 2949 and 2832 -- two of the buildings connect together, so if one building does not have heat, hot water; no one does, one building that stands alone has heat, hot water and then on other days they don't have none at all. I just received a phone call just two days ago from a resident sayin', "Oh the water is hot... oh, is not hot, now it's warm." At 2832 one day I got a phone call from this lady; she said, "Miss Aikens, we haven't had any heat here in three days." I said, "Three days?" So immediately I went downstairs to the management department, excuse me, the maintenance department to ask what is going on, because I didn't have any idea what it was. So I was told that the pump was broken, so immediately I investigated; I went there with my iPad to take pictures and sure enough, they was puttin' a pump in, but the next day still they didn't have any hot water and heat. A lot of times these pumps, they break down; when they break down, everybody's in the cold; we are told not to use our stove, but to keep our bodies warm, our children warm, our babies warm, the senior warm, we have no choice but to turn on the stove; this is how

1 we had to heat ourselves. The day that we had that
2 storm, the kids went to school... they went to school
3 in the cold and we had to stay here in the cold as
4 well. My thing is; how much did NYCHA pay for these
5 boilers; are they still payin' for it; if so, then I
6 think they should stop payin' for it and get their
7 tails on the ball and get our boilers back, because
8 this is what we do need. [cheers, applause] We was
9 told that... I was told that NYCHA has no control for
10 these boilers because it's not in their jurisdiction,
11 it's not, you now, from NYCHA; these boilers come
12 from different parts of the state. If you look at
13 'em, one may say Ohio, another one may say Chicago.
14 Did NYCHA know about these boilers before they came
15 in? Were they told that they cannot take 30-degree
16 heat... I mean, excuse me, 30-degree weather? Because
17 if not, then they should have found a more secure
18 place to have it placed at, because right now... right
19 now I don't care for them, I really don't, because I
20 like the fact that I can call my manager or my
21 maintenance or from community operations so they can
22 come out and just turn a button, clip a clip or
23 whatever it takes to make sure that we have hot
24 water. Just the other day my building, 2946, was out
25

1 of hot water; the hot water was cold. When NYCHA was
2 invited to have someone come into their development
3 and spend the night, I think that we should have
4 someone come to Carey Gardens, O'Dwyer, all of these
5 buildings [cheers, applause] out here to spend nights
6 as well so they can see how we are living. This is
7 what we have to put up in 30-degree weather
8 [background comment] and one time from my apartment
9 -- I'm speaking for Shirley Aikens' apartment -- in
10 my apartment... this was on election day, I was helping
11 with election; I got a text from my daughter sayin',
12 "Mommy, it is so hot in here," my baby was cryin'.
13 When I got home it was burnin' up; immediately I
14 called the Emergency Service number; they had to come
15 out to investigation; when they came out, Councilmen,
16 inside my apartment it read 90 degrees. I asked the
17 gentleman, "Please go into my bedroom, 'cause I give
18 you permission to," because I have three ceiling fans
19 and it was goin'. "Go in my bedroom." In the
20 bedroom it read 100-some degrees; this is too much
21 heat at that time. When I complained to NYCHA or our
22 residents complain to NYCHA about it, they said oh
23 well, if we turn it down they complain, if we turn it
24 up they complain. Yes, we are gonna complain; we
25

1 want to complain until this problem is solved, we
2 want to see these boilers gone; if they cannot be
3 gone, fix them so we can be comfortable inside our
4 apartments. We want hot water, we don't want our hot
5 water to be cold when we take a shower, 'cause I was
6 in the shower when all of a sudden mine went cold, so
7 I would like to see someone from NYCHA coming out and
8 spend these nights here in our development and when
9 you come out... [cheers, applause] and when they come
10 out, I don't want them comin' out and then all of a
11 sudden the grounds is clean, the apartment is clean,
12 [background comments] the building is clean, okay,
13 'cause what we always say as resident leaders at our
14 apartment, we always tell them, and I tell my
15 manager, please do not let anyone know that you're
16 coming, because when they're comin' out, the problems
17 they're tryin' to solve [background comments] they
18 solve it just like they'd be havin' [applause]
19 regular... just as they'd be havin' a regular check
20 point time. No, don't let them know you're comin'
21 'cause when they know you're comin', immediately
22 they're comin' out, just as they came out here for
23 you as you came here, trust me, the grounds is clean.
24 Why? They are clean because, Councilman, you are

here and other politicians [background comments, applause] are here as well.

So to finish my statement with these boilers here, I would like to know when... when will they be removed, because after that we've still got a lot more work to be done. Thank you.

[background comment, applause]

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Miss Aikens, I could tell you, not only did the Carey Gardens Community Center hear you loud and clear, I believe all of City Hall has just heard you loud and clear as well and thank you for that powerful testimony and I'm sure NYCHA's listening right now.

I'd like to call up next to speak Ann Valdez from Community Voices Heard; she's also a public housing resident.

[applause, cheers]

ANN VALDEZ: Thank you. Yes, my name is Ann, but my middle name is Michelle, so a lot of people here know me by Michelle, Ann Michelle Valdez. Not only am I a resident of public housing, Gravesend Houses, the third generation, I've been in public housing pretty much all my life. I am a leader at Community Voices Heard, as well as, I am also a

member of the People's Coalition of Coney Island.

This is a coalition that we put together between residents and business owners and people who had an interest in Coney Island, because we wanna fight for that money to be put back into Coney Island to truly be redeveloped, but not redeveloped someone else's way, we don't want just the business owners, the large businesses, to make money and push us aside, this is our home and we wanna rebuild it for us.

Now, as I said... good afternoon... I already told you I'm a resident, I've been here 47 years in public housing. Thank you Council Members Ritchie Torres and Mark Treyger and the Public Housing and Recovery Resilience Committees for holding this hearing here today, bringing it to us rather than having us come to you and letting the public testify first. Thank you very much.

[applause]

Community Voices Heard is a membership organization of low-income people, predominantly women with experience on welfare, building power in New York City and New York State to improve the lives of our families and communities. Our work in public housing began six years ago as we noticed the growing

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2 number of issues that needed to be addressed,
3 especially the national disinvestment in public
4 housing. The disinvestment has affected NYCHA
5 greatly and as a result public housing residents as
6 well. Since Hurricane Sandy, CVH has been bringing
7 together our members across the three affected
8 communities, Far Rockaway, Red Hook and Coney Island
9 to make sure... also the Lower East side... to make sure
10 the needs of NYCHA residents are getting addressed in
11 this moment of rebuilding. We are working on a
12 report with other partner groups that will be
13 released in two weeks on these issues. We are also a
14 member of the Alliance for a Just Rebuilding, a
15 coalition of community, labor and faith organizations
16 to make sure that the rebuilding addresses the
17 inequities of the past and include rebuilding the
18 human infrastructure too, people like me.

19 When Sandy hit, I can remember feeling a
20 great sense of loss and worry. As we were evacuated
21 from our homes in public housing and moved to
22 shelters, the thought of not being able to return
23 home plagued many residents. In the days after the
24 storm, as we were allowed back in our homes, we now had
25 to deal with no heat and no hot water, spotty

1
2 electricity and some places in Coney Island had to
3 deal with total darkness. The residents of public
4 housing soon received temporary generators and
5 boilers to restore hot water and heat. I couldn't
6 help but wonder three things -- first, I was
7 wondering, what happens when another hurricane hits
8 here; second, how is NYCHA gonna begin addressing the
9 growing mold issues, [applause, background comment]
10 but that's for another hearing, and then, as time
11 passed, the final thought was; where would these
12 boilers be put permanently so that we wouldn't have
13 the same problem again? The response by government
14 and by NYCHA has been slow. Here in Coney Island we
15 almost feel like we've been abandoned. It barely
16 looks like anything has been fixed out here, and as
17 my other friends and family here say, it was just
18 yesterday that you started to see things moving to
19 make it look as though they've been working on it,
20 [background comments] which makes it look like they
21 only did it to prepare for you guys. [background
22 comments]

23 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I'm sorry ma'am,
24 this is a City Council hearing; please, no
25 disruption.

1
2 ANN VALDEZ: Here in the community, we're
3 the ones cleaning up everything. We're looking at
4 creating more community gardens and we are all ready
5 to pitch in. We're still on temporary boilers,
6 apartments are not fully fixed, nobody on the first
7 floor in my development has moved back into their
8 apartments. Work needs to be done to get these
9 temporary boilers out of her and put in place
10 something permanent, and while they're doing this
11 they should be thinking about rebuilding back in a
12 more resilient way that's energy efficient and green
13 and helps NYCHA save money so that they can invest in
14 the much needed repairs.

15 As we just passed the one year
16 anniversary of Hurricane Sandy, NYCHA needs to
17 replace the temporary boilers and move all the
18 boilers and critical wiring systems of Zone 1
19 developments to a higher ground. While NYCHA has
20 recognized the importance of this recommendation and
21 proposed a similar measure, due to the funding
22 constraints 16 NYCHA developments still have 24
23 mobile boilers. In my development I have one boiler
24 for 15 buildings. Some buildings get heat, some
25 don't. Some get hot water, some don't; why I don't

1
2 know and none of them have been raised above the
3 flood level. We encourage NYCHA to prioritize this
4 work and to continue to advocate for funding so it
5 can be completed as soon as possible. The influx of
6 federal Sandy funds presents a unique opportunity to
7 put NYCHA buildings on the forefront of energy
8 efficiency and to benefit residents while
9 improvements are made.

10 CVH is working with the Alliance for a
11 Greater New York and other groups to think about how
12 NYCHA can get a new standard with its rebuilding.
13 Why don't we build back better on all fronts? Some
14 key things to look at are: employing residents at
15 every opportunity as we rebuild the boilers and the
16 generators. Let's see something better than Section
17 3 put in place and residents [applause] get the jobs
18 that are created. Make a system that is capable of
19 operating as a microgrid that can separate from the
20 City's grid, such as called cities; that way our
21 system will work even when the main system isn't.
22 Make sure CDBG DR funds are equitably distributed and
23 that NYCHA residents benefit from these rebuilding
24 funds as much as homeowner and renters in private
25 buildings. Thank you for allowing me the time to

1
2 speak and we look forward to working with you as we
3 rebuild and ensure that public housing can last
4 through the next storm. Thank you.

5 [applause, background comment]

6 [pause]

7 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Just bear with us,
8 we're actually expecting... very shortly the Speaker of
9 the City Council will be here directly as well to
10 hear from you and to speak to the residents here of
11 Coney Island and across the city communities.

12 Just to first ask Miss Joyner a quick
13 question. What has been the answer when you gave the
14 information to NYCHA that you viewed on the label of
15 the compressor that it should not be operating below
16 40 degrees; what was the response you received from
17 NYCHA?

18 ILMA JOYNER: There was no response.
19 What they did was, they piped... they didn't answer me,
20 but they did somethin' physically, they piped from
21 O'Dwyer's boiler to the boiler at Surfside
22 [background comment] to alleviate the problem, should
23 any of the boilers go out. But as far as an answer to
24 the compressor, there was none.

25

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: First just want to acknowledge the arrival and the presence here of the Speaker of the New York City Council, Melissa Mark-Viverito. [applause] She has really made it a priority to remake the face of our City Council and when I mentioned to folks here that City Hall is coming to hear... coming here to hear you directly, this was the message directly from the Speaker; she had done a remarkable job of making this Council to be much more responsive to the needs of local communities, so let's give her a loud, please, welcome here to Coney Island. [applause]

So Miss Joyner, you mentioned that... can you just clarify again, when you mentioned to them that you saw on the compressor that it should not be operating below 40 degrees, who did you speak with and what was their response?

ILMA JOYNER: I spoke with the men that were there that day that we were heat there... [interpose]

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right.

ILMA JOYNER: in the heating division; I think it was the director, assistant directors; I can't remember their names, but I can get that to you

1
2 at a later date, and they just looked at me, there
3 was really no response, they just looked at me, and
4 the next thing I knew, a couple of days later they
5 were puttin' in this piping from one boiler to
6 another at another site.

7 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Okay. And can you
8 just repeat for us, for the record, what did you
9 witness NYCHA do to keep the enclosure warm enough to
10 operate certain temperature?

11 ILMA JOYNER: They put a heater in... I... I...
12 you know, one of those little heaters that's maybe 12
13 inches long and they also were using kerosene heaters
14 that they use on construction sites; usually when
15 there's concrete, they don't really use 'em when
16 there's wood around. That's what they were doing
17 trying to unfreeze the pipes, the content of the
18 pipes, the oil; the water was frozen and they were
19 tryin' to unfreeze that with kerosene heaters.

20 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So basically a
21 small heater that you can buy for around \$10-20
22 bucks... [interpose]

23 ILMA JOYNER: Yes.

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: is heating up this
25 enclosure to keep this boiler running?

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2 ILMA JOYNER: Yes. Yeah.

3 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: That... you know and
4 I actually did go down and I viewed this myself and
5 Miss Joyner is correct, that what I saw was really
6 unacceptable. I'd also like to point out that when
7 we knocked on doors at O'Dwyer Houses, the Office of
8 Family Services from NYCHA came down and they were
9 knocking on doors because we urged them to come up
10 with a heating, a warming center, which was actually
11 here at Carey Gardens and NYCHA did provide...
12 [background comment] right, which is about... a
13 distance away and they provide buses to bring people
14 here to give them the option, but one of the problems
15 that I observed myself firsthand was that, you know,
16 in these NYCHA developments we have people who speak
17 many different languages, we have people who speak
18 English, Russian, Chinese, Spanish and we didn't have
19 translators to speak to these people to give them
20 that proper information. So my staff and I knocked
21 on these doors and saw families literally have their
22 ovens open, using them as sources of heat and I
23 informed them how dangerous that is and they didn't
24 wanna leave their home, just like many of them didn't
25 leave their home during Sandy; they don't wanna leave

1
2 their home now, and this to me is a crisis. No
3 family, senior, no child should stay in any apartment
4 in New York City period without heat and hot water;
5 it is inhumane. [applause] And it has been over 16
6 months since Sandy and we're here today because we
7 are demanding the plan, we're tired of the words and
8 the excuses; we wanna hear a plan directly from
9 NYCHA. I think we've heard some powerful testimony
10 here today from the panelists so far, but we wanna
11 hear from NYCHA what their plan is, but... [interpose,
12 background comment] are there any... yes, yes, please,
13 please [background comment].

14 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I just wanna know,
15 when I first proposed the idea of holding a public
16 housing hearing in a public housing development I was
17 told that this couldn't be done. I got resis... even
18 as a council member I got resistance and it was the
19 Speaker who said it's going to happen. So this event
20 would have been [applause] unimaginable without our
21 new Speaker and we owe her a huge debt. And with
22 that said, the new Speaker of the City Council,
23 Melissa Mark-Viverito.

24 [applause]
25

1
2 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: Good morning
3 everybody. You know I really wanna thank the
4 leadership of Chairs Treyger and Ritchie of the
5 Public Housing Committee for putting this together; I
6 wanna thank the staff, obviously it takes effort,
7 right, to put this together and to bring a hearing
8 into the community and I know that they've put a lot
9 of effort into making our materials available and
10 giving us a briefing on this. But there are many of
11 us in the Council that are living this reality with
12 all of you because we represent communities that have
13 been impacted and I have to tell you that those
14 members that represent Sandy affected areas, you as
15 community residents could not have stronger
16 advocates. Mark in particular, Treyger, and Ritchie
17 have been phenomenal, as well as the others, Menchaca
18 and others that represent these areas and really
19 standing up strong and saying that we're not doing
20 enough as a city to really help rebuild the areas
21 that have been severely impacted and it's a real
22 shame that we are at this point still today.

23 So we are looking aggressively as a City
24 Council and with the new energy and leadership also
25 that the new council members are bringing to really

1
2 make moves and serious moves to get these issues
3 addressed, that we can really serve as an aggressive
4 oversight also to the administration and making sure
5 that we do right by all of you.

6 So I just have a few comments that I'd
7 like to say. [applause, background comments] So I
8 just wanna thank everyone for being here. You know
9 this community, like many others around the city,
10 suffered tremendous damage from Superstorm Sandy and
11 I don't have to tell the people here today, none of
12 you here today, that our public housing, much of
13 which is near the water, was severely impacted by
14 flooding, power loss, ruined boilers that took out
15 your heat, hot water and has caused other major
16 problems. And although you have worked hard to get
17 back on your feet, there are still many problems from
18 Sandy that still need to be overcome, things that are
19 sometimes beyond your control and that you want, you
20 need and you deserve to have fixed as soon as
21 possible, and obviously that is the issue of the
22 ongoing boilers.

23 I went on a visit with some of the
24 council members in Red Hook to look at the issue in
25 some of the developments there and the issue of

1
2 temporary boilers; I was amazed to hear, and it was
3 just reinforced as I came in here today, that in
4 order for these boilers to operate here in New York
5 City in the dead of winter that you have temporary
6 dial, you know, plug-in heaters that have to keep
7 those thermostats above 40 in order for those boilers
8 to operation; that is just... I don't even understand;
9 it is incomprehensible to me that here in this city,
10 as big and as vast as we are, that this is happening;
11 it really was unbelievable and it's just been
12 reinforced by those that are at the table today.

13 You know in the immediate aftermath of
14 the storm NYCHA had to scramble to get the lights and
15 the heat on and the hot water back on in many of the
16 buildings around the City and I actually came out
17 here with now Public Advocate Tish James under the
18 prior representative and we came here to Coney Island
19 Houses and we were actually delivering water in the
20 building, going up 12 flights, 15 flights, to help
21 residents in some cases that were homebound. So
22 we've seen the devastation; went out to Staten
23 Island, saw it as well. So we've experienced that
24 and just cannot even imagine what many of the
25 residents are going through. So I really wanna thank

1
2 you all for your resiliency in light of all the
3 shortcomings that uh... that times, you know is also
4 coming from the federal government; let's be clear,
5 that has resisted in some cases even to give us as a
6 city our fair share as we're looking to rebuild and
7 that's an ongoing struggle to this day and we need to
8 make sure that the federal government is also
9 responding to us and that means that we have to put
10 that pressure on.

11 So the issue of these temporary boilers,
12 you know, might've been reasonable in the short term,
13 but not it's a year-and-a-half later after the storm
14 and there's no end in sight for the use of these
15 boilers and that's just not acceptable. So in fact,
16 this spring NYCHA will replace these temporary
17 boilers, which burn oil, with new temporary boilers
18 that burn natural gas is our understanding and that
19 will be good in terms of cost and environmental
20 impacts, but when will NYCHA residents get the
21 permanent boilers that they deserve?

22 So far NYCHA says that it can't get the
23 information about Sandy funding it needs to make
24 proper plans for replacing boilers and making its
25 housing more resilient to future storms. So that's

1
2 what we're hearing is that because we don't know what
3 it is that we're getting back there really is not
4 enough information to plan adequately. So that needs
5 to come to an end and we must push the federal and
6 state agencies and NYCHA to resolve this situation
7 and move ahead with fixing the Sandy damage and
8 preventing similar damage from occurring... and
9 preparing for that in the future.

10 So I wanted to be here; I'll be here for
11 at least another half-hour; I wanna hear more from
12 all of you; it was not even a second thought when it
13 was brought to my attention that we needed to come
14 into the community to hear from you, we needed to do
15 this. As much effort as it may have taken from us,
16 that's the least we could do, to come here to you to
17 hear from you. So... [applause] thank you all and
18 again, as I said, you know, you have great advocates
19 and representatives here and we will do everything we
20 can to continue to push this administration, the
21 federal government, the state government, and
22 ourselves to do better. So thank you all for being
23 here.

24 [applause]
25

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: First I wanna thank all of you for your testimony. I have a question for Miss Joyner. You noted that the boiler broke down on January 2; how long were you without heat?

ILMA JOYNER: [off mic] ...on January 4th.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I'm sorry?

ILMA JOYNER: I think January 4th is when it came back up, yeah. [interpose]

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And how many hours were you without heat and hot water?

ILMA JOYNER: We were without heat for like three, four days. Uhm-hm.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Three or four days?

ILMA JOYNER: Yeah, because it happened like 2 in the morning when most people are sleeping and I'm not, so. It started before people were aware that the boilers were down on the 2nd, I believe. I just happened to be up and it was cold.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And in your... and in your experience, do these boilers, these mobile boilers break down more frequently than standard boilers?

ILMA JOYNER: Yes they do. Yes they do... [interpose]

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: How...

ILMA JOYNER: They don't break down...

O'Dwyer they'll break down in Surfside, which is right across from it; they'll go to Gravesend... I think it's happening across the board...

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay.

ILMA JOYNER: and it's been happening more often than not and a lot'a times it does happen in the mornings, like 2 or 3 in the morning, so when people are asleep, or on weekends, and sometimes if it happens on the weekend it's the whole weekend. The whole weekend people are without heat and hot water.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And now it's been about a year-and-a-half since Hurricane Sandy and I'm wondering, over the course of that period has NYCHA either informed you or the tenants you represent about its plan for replacing these boilers?

[background comments]

ILMA JOYNER: No, they have not. I just would like to make a few comments, if I can when we finish.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Oh of course. But do you feel like you've been informed or kept in the dark about... [crosstalk]

ILMA JOYNER: No. Kept in the dark. It happens... when it happens, this is what they do; when something happens they'll put the notice up that day, like if the boilers stop they might put a notice up the next day, "Boiler's out of order"; they don't notify us.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So you have... I just wanna state for the record, you have no sense of when you're going to receive permanent boilers?

ILMA JOYNER: None.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Do you have any additional comment or?

ILMA JOYNER: I do.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Oh please.

ILMA JOYNER: I just want... I'm sorry; I just wanted to say... this is some things I wanna say, as far as like standby contracts -- I believe NYCHA should have put in place or have in place a standby contract. What I mean by that is; if they have a contractor on standby to come and do these things quickly, such as securing pumps, generators and other

1
2 emergency supplies. Also, I just wanted to... we need
3 an up-to-date survey of the electrical system. And
4 another thing; they tried to use the old damaged
5 motors during Sandy to help bring these boilers back
6 up. And another... I just wanna say that if I'm not
7 mistaken, the New York City Housing Authority has
8 applied for \$175 million from the Federal Emergency
9 Management Agency Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and
10 I don't know what happened with that; I do know that
11 Chuck Schumer backed this and so did other elected
12 officials, but we haven't gotten an answer from them
13 if they got the money or if it's in limbo or they're
14 waitin'... we don't know anything. They're sayin' that
15 they need money, but we don't know who approved what.
16 They don't tell us anything. To answer your question
17 -- we know very little about what's happening.

18 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Miss Aikens; do you
19 have a few comments:

20 SHIRLEY AIKENS: Thank you Mr. Torres.
21 Yes, my name is Miss Aikens; I'm the resident leader
22 for Carey Gardens, a document on Miss Melissa; can't
23 pronounce your last name... [background comment] I just
24 wanna say that Miss Joyner, she has said that notices
25 be put up in her development, but at Carey Gardens

1
2 there's no notices, there's no notices placed in our
3 development. [applause] I don't see any; if I don't
4 hear from a resident or residents we don't know
5 anything. When I don't have any heat and hot water
6 in my building... I have two buildings that are hooked
7 up with that one generator, excuse me, that one
8 boiler; if I don't have any heat and hot water, the
9 building across the street doesn't have one; the
10 building up the block from me, when theirs when down,
11 there was no notices posted; they were aware of the
12 situation and as a resident leader they should've
13 called me, they have my number; no one contacted me;
14 when I got the word from a resident that they was out
15 for three days; four days, when I went downstairs I
16 said well do you know anything about? They said yes,
17 they're on it. That's when they say that they was
18 replacing a pump, when they were replacing the pump...
19 there was an old pump that they had inside the
20 maintenance department; they replaced that pump, I
21 was there, they replaced that pump but yet they still
22 had to take another pump on top of that to pull, I
23 guess the heat, so they replaced that. But no, they
24 do not send any notices to inform the residents and I
25 always ask them, "Did you post notices up to let the

1 residents know what is going on?" And as Miss Joyner
2 has said, when it goes down, it could go down 3, 4:00
3 in the morning; we asleep, we may be sleepin' with
4 blankets over us to keep our bodies warm, so we don't
5 know. [applause] They ask me, "Well Miss Aikens; do
6 you know what time it went down?" No, I do not, but
7 I went down to building three, which is 2832, and I
8 was askin' some residents; they was tellin' me, well
9 when I got up this morning it was off, 6:00, maybe
10 4:00 in the morning, so which means now, we still
11 don't know, so it could've been 3... 2:00 in the
12 morning. Again, I would love to see that these
13 boilers be replaced and when Miss Joyner, excuse me,
14 from O'Dwyer had that problem with her boilers
15 happening and you had brought her residents over
16 here, Carey Gardens started having trouble with their
17 as well; now there's blocks of wood over their
18 boilers, alright, I guess to try to keep the cold
19 from coming inside; if they put a heater there, I
20 don't know; maybe the heater might burn down, I don't
21 know. But I know for a fact, after that happened
22 with O'Dwyer, now I look at Carey Gardens; they put
23 boards around these boilers. Why? I don't know,
24 they're not sayin' and if they did, they say to Miss
25

1
2 Aikens, well we've replaced with a board to try to
3 keep the cold from coming in. There's a lot of
4 smoke, as someone has said. Yes, a lot of smoke do
5 come out of these boilers, a lot, you make think
6 there's a fire going on inside of there and like
7 every time when there's smoke comin' out, all of a
8 sudden now, you don't have no heat, you don't have no
9 hot water, so they need to find the problem that is
10 goin' on with these boilers; if they cannot solve
11 that problem, get rid of them, get give us back our
12 boilers.

13 [applause]

14 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I just wanna quickly
15 acknowledge the arrival of New York City Council
16 Majority Leader, Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer.
17 [applause] Yeah, Miss Valdez.

18 ANN VALDEZ: Yes, I'm sorry; I forgot to
19 reiterate something. As I said, I have one boiler
20 and 15 buildings in Gravesend Houses, but what I
21 failed to remember to say was; we have no management
22 office. Our management office is her management
23 office, three blocks away from North Wyatt [sic].
24 Okay, so when Gravesend has a problem they either
25 have to go to the TA President, Deborah Carter, of

1 sometimes people reach out and know that I do a lot
2 of this advocacy, so they, you know, ask me, they
3 stop me in the street and ask me, "Well what do I do?
4 Who do I speak to?" And I start givin' out your
5 numbers, because they don't know who else to speak
6 to. Every single time something goes wrong in NYCHA,
7 every single time they're told, oh, call the CCC
8 number. The people at the CCC do not know the
9 relevance, the urgency or even where we're located;
10 we have to keep on telling them that over and over
11 again. You have no idea just how appreciative the
12 people here in Coney Island are that you came to us
13 instead of us havin' to come to you. [applause] I
14 appreciate it so much but as most of you know me, if
15 I have to come to City Hall I'll come to City Hall;
16 if I have to go to D.C. I'll go to D.C.; wherever it
17 takes, I'm there and I try really hard to make sure I
18 look out for everyone. When we had to be evacuated,
19 my heart broke because I had to sit here... I just
20 could not sit still; I got up, me, and my son at the
21 time was 13 years old and my sister; we went from
22 person to person asking, how can we help you? My
23 sister was helping to run one of the evacuation
24 sites, so we were giving out blankets, water; several
25

1
2 people we had to send back to the hospital. We dealt
3 with elderly people, put them all in... elderly and
4 disabled and critically ill, we put in one room,
5 constantly on top of them. My son helped to put
6 together beds, he... we did whatever we could, however
7 we could; we ran to the store to get people whatever
8 they couldn't get before the storm got there; people
9 were in tears, afraid they wouldn't have a home to
10 come home to and when we were told that there is some
11 electricity, many people got up from those horrible
12 evacuation sites, because after people were sent to
13 certain evacuation sites, our wonderful mayor at the
14 time decided to condense them, so now these
15 evacuation sites, you had three, four different
16 evacuation sites all put into FDR High School and it
17 was horrible. I mean, people were all just thrown
18 together, you had adults with children that they
19 didn't even know and it was horrible. We practically
20 ran from there. And I do thank the City Council that
21 did come over there to make sure we were okay,
22 Jumaane Williams, who's not here right now, he made a
23 personal appearance there as well. But what's goin'
24 on now is not very far from what had already taken
25 place 16 months ago. I don't see much change being

1
2 done and whenever you ask someone who is a NYCHA
3 employee what's going on; how's this being changed,
4 you get backwards answers, three different answers.
5 You know what's another big problem, the ter...

6 [interpose]

7 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Miss Valdez...

8 [crosstalk]

9 ANN VALDEZ: I'm sorry; this is
10 important, the terrible roofs. Every one of the
11 roofs here in Coney Island need to be redone.
12 [applause] Okay, this is not Hurricane Sandy, this
13 is problems that were there before. I can take you
14 personally, two people's homes who are bein' drenched
15 every time it rains; those roofs need to be checked,
16 [applause] they need to be redone and while you do
17 that, take all the electricity and all the power and
18 put it up there; then you'll take care of the
19 problem. [interpose]

20 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Yeah... Yeah...

21 [applause, background comments] Yeah, I wanna... we
22 have 22 people who are looking to speak, so we have
23 to speed up the program and I do wanna hear from
24 NYCHA, but you can be... you can rest assured that we
25 will be holding hearings about capital needs and

1
2 backlog of repairs, so there's gonna be plenty of
3 opportunity to [background comments] hear those
4 complaints. I wanna give my colleagues... Madame
5 Speaker, would you like... [background comments]
6 Council Member Menchaca.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Thank you
8 Chairman Torres and again, Chairman Treyger and
9 **01:16:17 [Spanish]** Melissa Mark-Viverito. I have a
10 question for Michelle, for Miss Valdez. You know, we
11 heard from Miss Aikens and Miss Joyner that there is
12 no communication coming from NYCHA on all this front;
13 can you tell us exactly any... any forms of
14 communication, 'cause I think we need to get this
15 clear as we move through the different neighborhoods,
16 the different developments where communication's
17 coming, what kind of communications are coming, how
18 they're coming. So if you'll... if... or you can answer
19 there's no communication; whatever it is, but I'd
20 like to know that. And the second question is; we
21 had a boiler that burnt down in Red Hook and we're
22 gonna hear about that from our Red Hook residents;
23 have any of your boilers caught on fire and that's
24 what I wanna kinda hear; I haven't heard that today,
25

1
2 so I wanna hear from you all if that's the case in
3 Coney Island.

4 ANN VALDEZ: As far as I know of, I
5 haven't heard of any boilers going on fire, but like
6 it's been said already, a whole lot of steam coming
7 out of it and in order to keep them going they use a
8 lot of gas [crosstalk]

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Right.

10 ANN VALDEZ: and it stinks...

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Right.

12 ANN VALDEZ: and it's hard to breathe and
13 as far as... [interpose]

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: What about the
15 communication? I'm sorry.

16 ANN VALDEZ: As far as communication...

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Yeah.

18 ANN VALDEZ: when the storm first hit,
19 this was a ghost town; nobody knew nothin', there was
20 nobody from higher up, from NYCHA on the ground
21 answering questions, telling us anything, and even
22 now you barely have any type of communication and
23 when you do, you get three different stories.

24 [crosstalk]
25

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Can you
3 describe... can you describe what is coming down the
4 pike from NYCHA as far as the temporary boilers and
5 what's happening?

6 ANN VALDEZ: Well I've asked questions
7 and most of the time it's, I don't know.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Okay.

9 ANN VALDEZ: They're working on it, like
10 it's been said. These two ladies here would know
11 better because they're TA presidents...

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Okay.

13 ANN VALDEZ: I'm just the resident who
14 cares with the big mouth.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: We just wanna
16 get a good sense, just quickly, what's coming down,
17 is it in flyers; is it in emails; we just need to
18 know what kinda communication's coming down.

19 SHIRLEY AIKENS: Alright. In my
20 development, Carey Gardens, that I can see from my
21 window, 'cause my window faces one of the boilers;
22 there are times when a lot of water drips down out of
23 the boiler and it'll be hot, steaming water comin'
24 hot; when that happens, we don't have no hot water,
25 we don't have no heat, along with the smoke, as I

1
2 said, that also turns the water off and the heat off
3 as well. When we have our council, president leader
4 meeting once a month, the resident leaders, we do
5 talk about that issue; I remember them sayin' that
6 they will have someone comin' out from HACs, which
7 office was here in this community center; now they're
8 no longer here; HACs was comin' out to speak about
9 those boilers; ain't nobody here to speak about it.

10 [crosstalk]

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Okay.

12 SHIRLEY AIKENS: I was also told... I'm not
13 going off record, 'cause I wanna stick with the
14 subject; I was also told that in 2832, which is one
15 building, the manager has said that they was gonna
16 bring in two boilers, two boilers; no other boiler
17 came in for that building, but they did put two pumps
18 down there; not two boilers... [interpose]

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Uhm-hm. Okay.

20 SHIRLEY AIKENS: And that's one of the
21 bad buildings. And as I said, two of the buildings
22 are connected together, but one boiler by itself
23 controlled both buildings and I do believe it may... I
24 don't wanna correct myself; I do believe they also

25

control where we are now at this community center as well.

COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Okay. Thank you so much for that.

ILMA JOYNER: Excuse me; just to let you know, there was a boiler that was on fire; I'll get that information to you.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Council Member Richards. You have... do you have any questions? [background comment] Council Member Chin.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you Chairs. Really glad to be here to see all the residents and some of... my resident leader from Smith came all the way from Lower Manhattan, so welcome. [applause] So having, you know, insufficient heat and hot water on a regular basis, I think a lot of public housing residents suffer from that and in my development, especially in Smith, it's gas outage; every other month there is something happening there and NYCHA is slowing working to resolve the problem, but I do agree with my colleague earlier that we have to have a sense of urgency. Now the question that I wanted to ask is that I know that the other issue with these boilers that I'm concerned about is the noise and the

1
2 fumes. Right after Superstorm Sandy we had a lot of
3 generators and boilers in Lower Manhattan; not just
4 in public housing, and it was causing a lot of air
5 pollution problems and noise problems, we had a lot
6 of complaints. So I wanna hear from you; were any
7 residents complaining about the noise and the fumes?

8 SHIRLEY AIKENS: Yes, it is true that the
9 boilers does make a lot of noise, which is difficult
10 for the residents to sleep with their windows who are
11 on it; the smoke also goes into their apartments, so
12 they have to keep their windows down and again, due
13 to the fact that sometime it does get 90 degrees
14 inside the apartments, the windows do have to be
15 open. But yes, the noise, 'cause I can hear it from
16 my window and I'm on the 10th floor; it does make a
17 lot of noise and also, as I said, a lot of smoke does
18 come out of those boilers and it does smell. So a
19 lot of tenants from my development and as well as... it
20 is not one of my developments, but this development
21 does not have a resident leader from Surfside
22 Gardens, which is a broken down development,
23 everything in there is broken down -- pipes, you name
24 it, all -- their boilers as well have been bad,
25 because I get calls from several residents there who

1
2 know me as a leader, so if they're comin' to me with
3 this problem and I don't know if any Surfside Gardens
4 residents are here that they can tell you, but yes,
5 they too have problems with their boilers and I can
6 see it from my window when they too be smokin'.

7 ILMA JOYNER: In my openin' statement I
8 eluded to the health and safety issues and I said I
9 didn't wanna go into detail with that but I would
10 submit it in my statement that I submitted at Council
11 because of time constraints, but that is one of the
12 issues that is on my health and safety.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: I think I would,
14 you know, ask you to encourage the residents who are
15 complaining about the noise to call the City, call
16 the DEP, call 311 to file the complaint so that we
17 can get another city agency, the Department of
18 Environmental Protection, to come in and really work
19 with us. But that sense of urgency, I think we need
20 to also let the administration know that they have to
21 help to solve this problem. In terms of waiting for
22 money from the feds, but the City Administration, the
23 Mayor has to come in on this; he already helped, you
24 know, NYCHA with giving back the money that NYCHA
25 gives to the Police Department every year, to put

1
2 back the money on repair, [interpose, applause] so I
3 think we need to work with the Mayor and the
4 administration to help really solve this problem.
5 But thank you all for being here today. Thank you
6 Chair.

7 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Council Member
8 Cumbo.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you to
10 Madame Speaker and our two Co-Chairs, Treyger and
11 Torres. I'll just take my political hat off for a
12 second -- they are absolutely brilliant and I'm so
13 excited to be here with them; they are setting a new
14 trend in the City of New York and I think we're going
15 to see a lot more hearings all across New York City,
16 bringing government to the people. [applause]

17 While my developments -- I represent Walt
18 Whitman, Ingersoll, Farragut, Atlantic Terminals, as
19 well as Lafayette Gardens -- were not impacted, I'm
20 certainly here not only as a member of this
21 committee, but also recognizing that if we don't get
22 ahead of this issue, just because it didn't happen to
23 my developments specifically, we need to recognize
24 that this is a citywide issue and you need to know
25 that you're certainly not alone here. [applause]

1
2 And also, as chair of the Women's Issues
3 Committee, I'm so excited to see so many dynamic
4 women as chairs and tenant leaders all across New
5 York City, you do a great service for our city and I
6 appreciate your testimonies, they were bold, they
7 were passionate, they were courageous, they were
8 informative; you came up with some innovative and
9 incredible ideas and I love my brothers too. [laugh]
10 But my question focuses more on after the hurricane,
11 immediately and up until this point; what I wanted to
12 know is; were you or the residents, and this was
13 eluded to earlier, displaced and for how long were
14 you displaced and what kind of damage did you see in
15 many of your developments; have some of the
16 apartments not even been able to be moved back into?
17 And during all of this time, with all of the heat and
18 the hot water issues, your inability to live there
19 for certain periods of time; have you all been
20 compensated; have your rents been reduced; has there
21 been any [background comments] sort of assistance
22 during this time that you all have received? And I
23 would like that for the record, because many of you
24 have not been able to live in your homes for some
25 period of time and as part of your agreements, you

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2 understand that heat and hot water are part of your
3 contractual lease agreements and if those aren't
4 being met, I'd like to know if there's been any sort
5 of communication as to the fact that you're
6 continuing to pay rent for services that have not
7 been rendered.

8 ILMA JOYNER: The answer to your...
9 [interpose, applause] your questions -- some of it I
10 can answer and some of it I can't. Why? Because the
11 TA presidents, we weren't allowed to leave, we were
12 there in our homes in the cold, we were the go to...
13 [interpose]

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: You said you were
15 not allowed?

16 ILMA JOYNER: Well we weren't... let me
17 just put it this way -- we stayed. Because we...
18 [interpose]

19 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you.

20 ILMA JOYNER: we were the point persons
21 for everything comin' into the community, so if we
22 weren't there, who were they gonna call? So the TA
23 presidents, we stayed. If we left for a day or two,
24 that was it, but we stayed through the whole thing,
25 we lived through it. And as far as people bein'

1
2 compensated, there was something that Houses put out
3 sayin' that they were gonna credit people for their
4 rent according to how many days they weren't in their
5 home, but I believe, at least in O'Dwyer, we still
6 have apartments on the first floor that are empty and
7 people have not returned, they've been displaced or
8 put elsewhere; those people we can't get in contact
9 with 'cause we don't know where they are. So we
10 don't know how they're faring where they are. And I
11 think Miss Aikens could answer some of the other
12 questions.

13 SHIRLEY AIKENS: Yes. I cannot speak for
14 all residents, but I know I... you know I did get a
15 decrease in my rent; I think that they should have
16 said well a whole month rent I didn't have to pay,
17 alright, because even though we were hit by Hurricane
18 Sandy, there were some developments that were out
19 longer; I'm speakin' for the Carey Gardens, which I
20 do have three buildings -- you're talkin' about 600
21 some units -- one of the developments... one of those
22 developments was out even longer; I think at least
23 maybe close to two months; they should've had two
24 months with no rent, but I'm quite sure Housing did
25 not do that, alright.

Also, on... I have one development, 2832, that only have apartments on the main floor, alright; those residents I know is back, also the bike enroll from PSA 1, they also was hit, because it also is on the main floor as well. The residents are back into their apartments, but you also have to look at not just the first floor, but other apartments that's there that was also hit by Sandy, alright, because maybe they was in search a rush to leave out, water got inside and there are mold that's still inside some of these developments that NYCHA has not yet taken care of.

ILMA JOYNER: Okay, I believe, to answer one of your questions when you talk about a rent abatement, because the repairs haven't been done, there's a process to that. Housing do not offer you rent abatements, the tenants have to go to court and get a rent abatement; that's not something they could usually offer or normally offer, they have to go to landlord/tenant court and it's a process in the landlord/tenant court to get a rent abatement for anything, any type of repairs.

COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you.

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2 ANN VALDEZ: And as I mentioned, I have
3 15 buildings in Gravesend Houses and... I'm trying to
4 count quickly, but there's approximately 10 of them
5 that have first floor apartments; most of the first
6 floor apartments are totally damaged, still not
7 opened, still not completed, as well as seventh floor
8 apartments that are ravaged, the apartment above me
9 hasn't been lived on, even before Hurricane Sandy,
10 for about two years. The people that were living
11 there were relocated and not to close by facilities,
12 but all the way across Brooklyn and other facilities
13 further away and it was ravaged, it was horrible and
14 no, most people... nobody removed back into the
15 apartment, but a few people were able to salvage
16 their apartment so they didn't relocate; those are
17 still there, but there's like 10 buildings.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I just wanna thank
19 you for your leadership; I know that in the interest
20 of time they wanna hear from NYCHA, but I thank you
21 for your leadership and your courage and for your
22 bravery and for staying there and providing the level
23 of leadership that you all have; when you describe
24 the situation with the boilers and the kerosene and
25 makeshift heaters, it's just so heartbreaking to

1
2 think about what could've possibly happened as a
3 result of such irresponsible behavior and to know
4 that this is happening predominantly to black and
5 brown communities is an atrocity in the City of New
6 York, so I thank you for your leadership and I'll
7 turn it back to the Chair, because I know they have
8 limited time.

9 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Yeah, I just wanna
10 speed it up quickly, so I wanna give Council Member...
11 there are two more people who wanna ask questions,
12 Council Member Mendez.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Thank you. For
14 the tenant leaders, do you pay electricity in your
15 developments? No. Okay. And... so I'm just trying to
16 find out what are the similar problems. And with
17 the developments that have temporary boilers, are any
18 of you experiencing extra mice, rats or any other
19 kind of problems? [background comments]

20 ILMA JOYNER: [background comment] We at
21 O'Dwyer, I was walkin' past the boiler not too long
22 ago and a rat ran right across my feet, so we are
23 experiencing... there's more roaches, there's other
24 kind of bugs that I've never seen before; I don't
25

1
2 know what to make... so the rodent problem has gotten
3 worse... [crosstalk]

4 ANN VALDEZ: Yes.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Is this in the
6 development or just outside the development?

7 ILMA JOYNER: It... it's in... [interpose]

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Both?

9 ILMA JOYNER: It's in the development,
10 it's in the people's homes; they're experiencing more
11 of that. Yes.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Thank you very
13 much.

14 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Council Member Van
15 Bramer.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Thank you
17 very much to both of our Chairs and to our Speaker
18 and echoing the comments of my colleague, this is...
19 this hearing is indicative of the new progressive New
20 York City Council; it is very, very exciting to see
21 this happening here. I am very privileged to
22 represent the Queensbridge Houses, the largest public
23 housing development in the country, as well as the
24 Ravenswood and Woodside Houses and while my
25 developments were not affected by Sandy, I just wanna

1
2 point out and I know a lot of folks know this; the
3 boilers in those buildings are also breaking down and
4 we have significant problems in those developments
5 with boilers. But sticking to the topic, I wanted to
6 ask, particularly our leadership, who among the NYCHA
7 leadership are you in touch with, because I was
8 particularly concerned to hear that you're not
9 getting through, people aren't getting back. So as
10 elected leaders who represent in some cases thousands
11 of residents, who is your point of contact, how high
12 up in the NYCHA chain are you able to go and who is
13 not communicating with you and who are you not able
14 to get to, because I know that if I have an issue at
15 Queensbridge, Ravenswood or Woodside Houses I have a
16 person that I can get to and I know they will get
17 back to us. You need to have that exact same access,
18 so if that is not happening, that is a problem that
19 needs to be addressed right away. [applause] So
20 would you all talk about who is that person or that
21 entity or that office and how high up can you go,
22 because if you're not getting through, we have to
23 change that.

24 ILMA JOYNER: Well we can go as high as
25 to the top, but there's a procedure, when we don't

1
2 get things done we ask someone that's... our CCOP
3 Chair, Lillie Marshall, and she does get the job
4 done. If it doesn't happen at this level, we go to
5 her and she does get the job done for us.

6 SHIRLEY AIKENS: Council Member Van
7 Bramer, my... uh Miss Aikens... as Miss Joyner said, we
8 does have to go to our CCOP Chair, Miss Marshall,
9 who's here today from Red Hook; my first step is
10 goin' to my manager; from my manager, if I do not get
11 any success, then I would go to my CCOP Chair; if I
12 don't get any results from her, there is a district
13 chair over her who I have to go to, someone from 250
14 Broadway. As resident leaders, I feel that we should
15 also have close contact even with the chairperson who
16 we have now; I don't see anyone from 250 comin' out
17 here, even when we had Hurricane Sandy, I saw that
18 they was in Gravesend, Coney Island Houses, but not
19 in Carey Gardens and I was hurt by that, when I saw
20 pictures of them inside the News Journal, how they
21 was comin' out to those developments and bypassin'
22 Carey Gardens and you must bypass me to get to those
23 developments, because here, we are the first one
24 comin' to go to the West End, so when you bypass
25 Carey Gardens, which was hurt by Hurricane Sandy, and

1
2 I praise Councilman Treyger for helpin' us get out of
3 sinkholes, because if I was in that sinkhole, you
4 won't see my head, so I praise you for helpin' us
5 with that and I would love to have someone, startin'
6 with the Chairperson, to come out to look at all of
7 these boilers, to go inside the residents' apartments
8 as well to see what's goin' on in there. [applause]

9 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So again, I wanna
10 thank all of you for your impassioned testimony and
11 we're gonna proceed with the next panel. So thank
12 you so much. [applause] And I wanna give our Madame
13 Speaker the opportunity to say a few words.

14 SPEAKER MARK-VIVERITO: As the panel
15 transitions over, again I wanna thank everyone that
16 is here; I'm gonna have to leave at this point, but I
17 know that you're in more than capable hands with the
18 Chairs of this Committee; I wanna thank all the
19 council members that are here and took the time to be
20 here as well. The last thing I'll say is, please
21 understand, this is a priority for this Council, the
22 residents that are here and I see some of my
23 residents too, and as the Speaker, and this is
24 something that's also fascinating, I think; there has
25 never been a speaker in this City Council that comes

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2 from a district like the one that I represent. I...
3 [cheers, applause] and the perspective that that
4 brings, right, to the leadership of this body is
5 really important; I represent the most public housing
6 in the City of New York is in my district, so this is
7 [applause] a priority for me; I represent over 20
8 developments, over 20,000 units of public housing, so
9 please understand, this is very, very dear to me
10 personally, but it's gonna be dear to this Council
11 moving forward and I look to working in partnership
12 with the Housing Authority to make sure that we bring
13 back the living conditions to a quality that is
14 dignified for all the residents in public housing.
15 Thank you very much.

16 [applause]

17 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I would like to call
18 up the next panel, the New York City Housing
19 Authority. We have with us Ray Ribeiro, the
20 Executive Vice President for Capital Projects and
21 Carlos Laboy-Diaz, the Executive VP for Operations,
22 and both of them report directly to the general
23 manager who oversees the day to day operations of the
24 Housing Authority.

25

I'm gonna ask that both of you please raise your right hand. Do you swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth in your testimony before this Committee and to respond honestly to Council Members' questions?

Thank you; you may proceed.

ILMA JOYNER: Chairman Ritchie Torres, Chairman Mark Treyger, members of the Committees on Public Housing and Recovery and Resiliency, other distinguished members of the City Council, Miss Byrd, our resident board member and public housing residents, good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the mobile heating systems installed at New York City Housing Authority developments impacted by Superstorm Sandy.

[interpose]

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I'm sorry Mr. Ribeiro... Can you hear Mr. Ribeiro? [background comments] Okay, if you'll...

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: You want me to start over? Is that better?

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Can you hear him now? [background comments]

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Better?

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay, I wanna be...
okay, that's much better.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Okay. Want me to start
over?

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: It's up to you.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Chairman Ritchie Torres
and Chairman Mark Treyger, members of the Committees
on Public Housing and Recovery and Resiliency, other
distinguished members of the City Council, Miss Byrd,
our resident board member, and public housing
residents, good morning. Thank you for the
opportunity to discuss the mobile heating systems
installed at New York City Housing Authority
developments impacted by Superstorm Sandy. I am
Raymond Ribeiro, Executive Vice President for Capital
Projects. Joining me today are Carlos Laboy-Diaz,
NYCHA's Executive Vice President for Operations, and
other members of NYCHA's team. This morning I would
like to address a number of issues stemming from the
Authority's use of mobile heating systems in the
aftermath of Superstorm Sandy. I will also address
how these systems fit into the provision of heat and
hot water at NYCHA developments during our efforts to
build more resilient infrastructure.

I would like to stress that we have very clear plans to permanently replace the mobile boilers in a way that is smart, safe and more dependable for residents while emphasizing that we are fighting for every dollar to make those plans a reality and we remain a long way from achieving our goal.

As every New Yorker knows too well, Superstorm Sandy caused great destruction in places across New York City and at many NYCHA developments, 80,000 of our residents in 423 buildings were significantly affected, many of whom are still feeling the impact more than one year later. In the weeks following Sandy my colleagues and I worked around the clock to bring heat and hot water back to residents by restoring dozens of existing boilers and installing 23 mobile boilers. In some cases repairing the infrastructure that was in place proved to be impossible, as salt water damaged parts beyond repair.

In order to secure the mobile boilers we first focused locally by relocating mobile boilers from our regular construction program, we then procured 21 additional mobile boilers from as far away as Texas. Prior to installation we ensured that

1
2 they would work with NYCHA's infrastructure -- low
3 pressure versus high pressure or be appropriately
4 sized with the right horsepower -- and we deployed
5 electricians, plumbers, welders and steamfitters to
6 install the necessary connections; permitting issues,
7 weight restrictions and difficult transportation
8 within the devastated tri-state area made delivery
9 challenging.

10 Although a destructive event, Superstorm
11 Sandy offered an opportunity to pursue a more
12 resilient, sustainable future. Very early on in the
13 aftermath of the storm, once we had completed basic
14 repairs to our damaged systems, we made a
15 determination that it would be irresponsible to
16 simply repair or replace boilers back in those same
17 basement locations; that approach would potential
18 compromise our infrastructure and residents would
19 remain vulnerable during future extreme weather
20 events.

21 This finding came after a detailed
22 examination of how our entire organization --
23 buildings, employees, residents and equipment
24 performed during Sandy and how they can become better
25 prepared for future emergencies. As part of this

1
2 effort we conducted detailed and thorough assessments
3 of each boiler affected by the storm, we examined the
4 extent of their damage and analyzed replacement costs
5 and we evaluated plans to make our infrastructure
6 generally more resilient to future disasters or
7 extreme weather events. At the time of the
8 assessment, if we had decided to simply repair in
9 place and if we only wanted to rebuild for the short-
10 term expediency instead of long-term sustainability,
11 the replacement of the boilers would be completed.
12 Our commitment to do what's most resilient rather
13 than what's easiest is a message that we have been
14 communicating to various stakeholders.

15 We have developed comprehensive plans for
16 the safer, more resilient, more dependable
17 infrastructure I mentioned a moment ago. For some of
18 our developments we wanna raise the boilers and
19 electrical equipment and house them in separate
20 building extensions or stand-alone buildings, as you
21 can see in the picture above, a rendering of what we
22 propose. For other developments we proposed advanced
23 resiliency efforts, such as central boiler plans or
24 combined heat and power plants that can also provide
25 backup electricity. At others we proposed alternate

options, such as insulated facades that will reduce the heat load and preserve the building's envelope.

NYCHA is aggressively pursuing the funding needed to build this better infrastructure from multiple sources, including insurance, FEMA, the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery Program; we are working with the New York City Department of Buildings for regulatory support related to that funding; NYCHA, together with other affected agencies are working to justify the boiler replacements to ensure the most resiliency possible. Despite these efforts, the Authority remains without sufficient commitment to realize our resiliency plans. This uncertainty and lack of funding seriously impacts the design and execution of repairs and resiliency efforts. Without knowing how much of our resiliency efforts will be funded we cannot begin the requisite final design, procurement and construction processes to replace our mobile boilers in the optimal way. And without the money we need for true resiliency we'll simply have to return the boilers to their previous locations, putting them at risk for damage

1
2 from future disasters and threatening residents'
3 quality of life.

4 Currently there are 24 mobile boilers
5 serving approximately 8,800 families in 110 buildings
6 at 16 developments. There are also two backup mobile
7 boilers at Surfside. Since installing the mobile
8 boilers NYCHA has paid a total of \$55.8 million; this
9 includes approximately \$18.2 million for rental,
10 \$33.6 million for fuel and \$4 million for
11 installation. The mobile boilers are housed in self-
12 contained trailers or temporary structures. Power
13 and steam distribution lines connect them to the
14 permanent systems for the buildings. In addition,
15 temporary piping is in place for fuel supply, water
16 supply, condensate return lines -- basically, the
17 mobile boilers generate steam, which is then
18 distributed via the existing infrastructure in the
19 buildings. The mobile boilers are just as effective
20 at producing steam as regular boilers and have
21 sufficient capacity to serve the needs of the
22 developments. In some cases their horsepower ratings
23 exceed the regular boilers; the only difference is in
24 how they interact with the steam distribution system.

1
2 To clarify, existing boilers have backup
3 systems which the mobile boilers currently lack.
4 When a permanent boilers fails, staff, utilizing
5 backup systems, is able to make manual adjustments to
6 compensate. The automated distribution systems that
7 boilers utilize were also damaged by Sandy;
8 therefore, the distribution systems are now manually
9 regulated according to outside temperature. For this
10 reason, residents may experience fluctuation in heat
11 distribution. By separately tracking heat and hot
12 water complaints related to the mobile boilers, we
13 determined that there is a minor difference in the
14 number of complaints received about the mobile
15 boilers. We attribute this slight difference to the
16 extremely cold weather we've experienced this year.
17 The mobile boilers will be in place for at least two
18 more heating seasons, contingent on funding
19 commitments, [background comments] completion of
20 designs and construction.

21 We are often asked why we are unable to
22 proceed with design without funding commitments.
23 Design costs typically make up 10 percent of the
24 construction costs; therefore, it is not cost-
25 efficient to design without those funding guarantees.

We've learned important lessons as a result of this winter's extreme cold weather and are applying this knowledge to the provision of more efficient service for mobile systems. In early January, amid a significant winter storm with blizzard-like conditions and record-breaking cold temperatures, various boiler components froze. Despite the extreme weather conditions, staff worked continuously to restore service, replacing the broken components and thawing frozen sections with portable space heaters. Learning from this incident we bolstered weatherization by insulating their enclosures and all water lines, installing heaters to keep key components from freezing during frigid weather and heat trace lines on all water piping. In addition, we fortified heating systems for both O'Dwyer and Surfside Gardens by connecting them, installing over 300 feet of above-ground steam lines and establishing two additional backup mobile boilers at Surfside. This means that there will be a backup in case a boiler goes down at either location. While the mobile boilers have always been continuously monitored and maintained, we also increased the

number of staff responsible for monitoring them during cold snaps.

These key lessons learned allowed us to work through a second cold snap in mid January without any major disruptions. At all locations that utilize mobile boilers we are currently replacing those oil burning systems with natural gas systems. As I previously mentioned, these new boilers will have built-in backups in case an individual boiler must go off line for general maintenance and repairs and the switch to natural gas will make fuel supply more efficient, since our developments already receive gas through existing pipelines, also natural gas is a cleaner burning fuel, an important benefit for residents and more environmentally friendly.

Residents are NYCHA's most critical partner throughout our efforts to address the day to day maintenance of temporary systems and our most important stakeholder as we aim to rebuild smarter and more resilient and sustainable systems in the future. Since the storm subsided we have consistently sought the input of NYCHA residents and have worked very hard to provide them with up to date information. In addition to the newsletters that we

distributed on a quarterly basis in four languages to the residents of Coney Island, Red Hook and the Rockaways in the year following the storm, we published a special edition on Sandy's one-year anniversary that provided more information about the mobile boilers and their replacement.

Just this past Tuesday we conducted a meeting with the Resident Association presidents of all developments served by our mobile boilers to update them on the status of our boilers. Additional meetings will be scheduled at the individual developments for all residents to provide input on the preliminary design concepts in the coming months.

While NYCHA has worked to protect residents, our staff, properties and infrastructure against potential emergencies, more needs to be done. Funding is necessary for us to recovery from Superstorm Sandy's destruction in a way that is smart and provides a strong foundation for the future. Until that funding is committed we are doing everything we can. We have met with many elected officials to discuss specific needs at individual developments and we will continue to do so. If provided to us, City capital dollars can be leveraged

1
2 with any recovery funds that we receive to help
3 address those needs. Also, we ask that you advocate
4 for additional state and federal funds that will help
5 us accomplish our resiliency work.

6 We look forward to working on these very
7 important issues with the Mayor and the City Council;
8 partnership with elected officials and other key
9 stakeholders is a vital part of our efforts to tackle
10 the challenges that we have been served; it's a
11 safeguard against any incidents that may arise.
12 Future residents of NYCHA residents depend on us to
13 make the right choices today and we must work
14 together to obtain as much funding as possible to
15 serve them.

16 Thank you and I'm happy to answer any
17 questions that you may have.

18 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you Mr.
19 Ribeiro, I appreciate your testimony. As you know,
20 thousands of the residents that you serve in 16
21 developments have been living without permanent
22 boilers for two heating seasons and according to your
23 testimony you're projecting that these same tenants
24 will have to continue living without permanent
25 boilers for two more heating seasons. And so I think

1
2 the most important question is why is it taking this
3 long? You know we get that you can't rush it, you
4 can't do it hastily, you have to do it right, but
5 having said that, why is it taking this long?

6 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: As I indicated in the
7 testimony, we have concrete plans for how we believe
8 we should best move forward with permanent, more
9 resilient infrastructure; however, we have not gotten
10 any commitments to fund that particular resiliency
11 work. So it is, as I testified, irresponsible to
12 move forward with detailed designs for projects that
13 we have no funding commitments for.

14 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: First, I guess two
15 questions, first; have you presented an outline of
16 these plans to the residents affected by the
17 hurricane?

18 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Yes, we've... from early
19 on after Sandy, we've had several meetings at several
20 different developments in the affected areas to go
21 over conceptually what we thought were the most
22 resilient and appropriate ways to move forward; as I
23 testified, just this past Tuesday we met with the
24 resident leaders in the affected developments to show
25 them exactly where we were with regards to the mobile

1
2 boilers and what our plans were for the long-term
3 resiliency and recovery from Sandy.

4 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So as far as the
5 Housing Authority is concerned, you have kept the
6 tenants abreast of the progress of their heating
7 systems and the progress of replacing the boilers?

8 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We have tried to keep
9 the residents aware of what our conceptual plans on
10 moving forward, yes.

11 [background comments]

12 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: What is causing the
13 delay in receiving funding?

14 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: There are several
15 potential funding sources for us to address Sandy-
16 related work; many of those funding sources believe
17 that we should not even be replacing our boilers;
18 that we should be simply repairing the boilers in the
19 same location that they exist today.

20 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So let's break down
21 those funding sources. My understanding is that
22 there are essentially three, maybe four sources of
23 funding; one is funding from your insurance
24 providers, funding from FEMA, and there's public
25 assistance and then the Hazard Mitigation Grant, and

funding from HUD, which is the largest of the three pots. So how much funding are you seeking from your insurance providers?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: For the developments that were impacted we have insurance coverage of up to \$440 million.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And how much have you received?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: From the insurance companies to date we have received \$187 million.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And so what is causing delay receiving the remainder of those funds?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: The insurance companies, as I indicated, are not convinced and will not pay for boiler replacements, they will simply pay for the cost of a repair of these boilers.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So if your intent on rebuilding... I'm sorry... installing these boilers with resiliency in mind, then it seems like you have no hope for securing the remainder of that funding; is that fair to say?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We believe at this point that the insurance companies will only provide

us funding for the value of work associated with repairing those boilers; yes, that's correct.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay. What about FEMA; how much are you seeking from FEMA?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So FEMA, we are seeking... we estimate that we could be entitled to approximately \$150 million from FEMA; we are seeking to recovery as much of that as possible and more if we can; to date we have received \$3 million from FEMA.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And my question is; what's causing the delay in receiving the rest?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So again, FEMA believes that NYCHA should be moving forward with repairing our boilers...

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: in the same location that they currently exist; we are working with FEMA, together with other city agencies -- the Department of Buildings -- to convince FEMA otherwise.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And HUD; how much are you seeking from HUD?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Our plan, which is outlined in the City's Action Plan, overall Action

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2 Plan related to CDBG, identifies NYCHA's entire
3 program value at \$1.8 billion; subtracting out from
4 that the other funding sources that we already
5 described, the unmet need that's described in the
6 Action Plan for NYCHA is \$1.2 billion.

7 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So about \$1.2
8 billion and of which how much have you received so
9 far from HUD?

10 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: In January NYCHA was
11 allocated \$108 million.

12 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: \$108 million. Okay.
13 And what's causing delay in receiving the rest of the
14 HUD funding?

15 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: There are additional
16 CDBG funds being contemplated at this point; there is
17 a public comment period that is ongoing right now
18 which proposes an additional \$200 million for NYCHA.

19 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So that would be a
20 total of... between the two allocations that would be a
21 total of \$300 billion?

22 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Between the two...
23 [interpose]

24 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I'm sorry, \$300
25 million.

1
2 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Between the two CDBG
3 allocations, yes, it would be a total of \$308
4 million; however the first allocation of \$108 million
5 was specifically for emergency power backup.

6 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: But those funds fall
7 well short of the \$1.2 billion that you estimate you
8 need?

9 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Yes, they will.

10 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And so what reason
11 is they don't believe that you'll receive funding
12 beyond the original \$300 million?

13 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So as I described, the
14 second tranche of funding that was allocated to New
15 York City is currently being vetted; public hearings
16 are taking place this week, actually; submittals will
17 be made, the formal submittal will be made to HUD
18 later in March; we are confident that we will get
19 that funding; however, we are not sure whether there
20 will be an additional tranche of Sandy funding
21 allocated to New York City and we are not sure if
22 there is a third tranche that's awarded to New York
23 City how much of that would be allocated to public
24 housing.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: 'Cause it seems to me, so you might only receive about \$300 million from HUD, well short of what you would need, the billion that you would need; am I understanding you correctly, between those two tranches?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: That's correct, those two tranches... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And it... and... and it seems like you're planning... you're planning with resiliency in mind, which is responsible, but you're... it seems like you're planning for the best case scenario, that you will receive all the funds that you will need. Do you have plans for the worst case scenario?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: The worst case scenario would be that we would put the boilers back in our basements and be subject to the same problems that we experienced in the next event.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: What would be the cost of simply repairing these boilers?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: The cost of basic repairs, and this is not broken out specifically for boilers, but all of our infrastructure -- our boilers, our electrical systems all of the

1
2 infrastructure that was damaged -- the cost of a
3 simple repair for all of the affected developments is
4 approximately \$400 million.

5 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And that refers only
6 to the boilers?

7 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: No, that is to simply
8 repair in place everything that was damaged would
9 cost \$400 million.

10 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Do you know the cost
11 of boiler repairs, separate from everything else?

12 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Not separately, no,
13 because the boiler is dependant on the electrical
14 system, so there is overlap between all of the
15 systems. So for boiler specifically, no, we don't
16 have that broken out.

17 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay. I guess my...
18 you're projecting that the tenants will have to go at
19 least two more heating seasons without a permanent
20 boiler; is that...

21 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: That is our projection,
22 yes.

23 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: 'Cause I'm wondering
24 what's the basis for that projection; it seems like
25 you're not sure how much funding you're gonna receive

1
2 from FEMA or your insurance provider or HUD, you're
3 not sure when you're gonna receive the funding;
4 you're not sure whether you're going to receive the
5 funding at all, so what reason is there to believe
6 that the tenants [clapping] are gonna be without
7 permanent boilers for two heating seasons; it could
8 be three, it could be four, it could be five; does
9 NYCHA truly have any sense of how long it will take
10 to get permanent boilers here?

11 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Again, given where we
12 are, given the progress that we've recently made in
13 discussions with FEMA, given where we are with the
14 second tranche of CDBG money that's going to be
15 submitted to HUD in March, we are getting a lot
16 closer to being where we need to be to fund the ideas
17 that we want to implement to provide the resiliency.
18 With regards to how do we project out to two seasons;
19 like some of what we're proposing to do, as you can
20 see in that diagram there, is build new structures,
21 elevated structures; all of that will require
22 specific designs to be prepared, environmental
23 reviews for new construction, especially in some of
24 the sensitive areas down here in Coney Island and the
25 Rockaways, and then ultimately construction of a new

1
2 facility of that size. Given the timeframes for
3 design, environmental reviews and then ultimately
4 construction, we project that out to be about three
5 years.

6 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I have a few
7 questions about the boilers themselves and then I
8 wanna give Chairman Treyger, as well as my colleagues
9 and opportunity to ask a few questions. What brand
10 or kind of boilers are you using of mobile boilers;
11 is it multiple types, is it one type?

12 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Multiple types of
13 boilers, some of them are trailer mounted, some of
14 them are skid mounted, some of them are low pressure;
15 some of them are high pressure. We basically got
16 boilers from wherever we could get them in the
17 immediate aftermath of Sandy. As I testified, you
18 could not get a mobile boiler here locally, and
19 forget about New York, but the northeast, many of our
20 boilers came from Kentucky, Tennessee and Texas.

21 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And are you
22 monitoring the performance of these boilers closely?

23 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Yes we are.

24 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Do you know which
25 types of boilers seem to perform the best and which

1
2 perform the worst; do you have a sense of... since
3 there's a wide variety of boilers at this
4 developments?

5 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So yes, we track the
6 issues that we have with each of the boilers, the
7 maintenance that we have provided at each of the
8 boilers and some do perform better than others, some
9 have more outages than others, so yeah, we are aware
10 of that; it's part of the reason that we pushed to
11 replace these mobile boilers with new, more reliable
12 mobile boilers.

13 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And how long... like
14 what is customary; how long do these... do buildings
15 like... as large and as old as NYCHA's public housing
16 stock operate on mobile boilers; what's... is it
17 customary for buildings like yours to operate on
18 mobile boilers for four heating seasons; is that a
19 normal use of mobile boilers?

20 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: If designed correctly,
21 a mobile system could last that long. As I
22 testified, the mobile boilers that we have in place
23 today were what we could procure immediately after
24 Sandy and we made them work. Ideally, which is what
25 we've done since, ideally you want to building

1
2 redundancy into these systems, ideally you would
3 wanna have them fueled off of the natural gas that
4 exists at these developments. We couldn't do that
5 immediately after Sandy, but are putting ourselves in
6 the position now to do that so that the scenario that
7 you describe, where the mobile boilers are active for
8 years would be no issue.

9 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And I take it...
10 actually, the new chair has not started yet.

11 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: She has not started.

12 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: CHAIRPERSON TORRES:
13 She has not started. Okay. But obviously the
14 Mayor's Office and the Deputy Mayor for... is it Deputy
15 Mayor Glen who oversees New York City Housing
16 Authority?

17 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: That's correct.

18 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And she's been kept
19 abreast of... of the emerg... of the temporary boilers?

20 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Absolutely.

21 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay. Chairman
22 Treyger.

23 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you Mr.
24 Ribeiro and I thank you for NYCHA folks for being
25 here and listening directly from the residents.

1
2 Where do I begin? Just a quick question. What was
3 the total amount that was... you were seeking from your
4 insurance company, from NYCHA?

5 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Our insurance is capped
6 at \$440 million.

7 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: \$440 million,
8 right?

9 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Obviously we are
10 seeking all of that...

11 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And what is the
12 name of the insurance company?

13 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: There are multiple
14 insurers; we have commercial insurance as well as
15 NFIP insurance with multiple carriers.

16 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And what efforts
17 has NYCHA undertaken to contest that amount, because
18 it seems to me... you had testified that it is gonna
19 cost NYCHA \$400 million for total repairs, including
20 the boilers and the generators and it appears to me,
21 based on what you're covered for, it's \$440 million
22 that would cover the cost of doing that. Why are
23 they giving you a hard time and what efforts have you
24 undertaken to get that money back to NYCHA to help
25

these families who are subjected to these terrible conditions?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We meet with our insurance carriers on a regular basis to resolve all of the issues that they bring to our attention; we retained outside support, insurance expertise to help us in those conversations and debates with the insurance companies; it's just a long process of dealing with the insurers.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Can you provide this Committee the names of these insurance companies?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We certainly can provide that list; it is, you know over 20 different carriers, but we can provide that list, yes.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I would definitely like to get a list of those insurance companies and I am assuming we have contracts with them?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Is that correct?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We have policies with those carriers, yes.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right, signed contract between... [crosstalk]

1
2 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Yes.

3 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: more than two
4 parties and these contracts are subject to review,
5 even by the City Comptroller, by the State
6 Comptroller; is that correct?

7 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I couldn't tell you who
8 they're subject to review.

9 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Well I... what I'm
10 telling you is that we're gonna have every level of
11 government looking at these contracts. [applause]
12 If you're paying the insurance company, I'm sure a
13 hefty fee each month, they're there during the bad
14 times and we experienced a bad time here [applause]
15 across our city. We have to publicly list them and
16 let the public know that these insurance companies
17 are withholding the amount of money that's needed to
18 repair the damage that was done to our NYCHA
19 buildings. We need to know their names and the
20 public should know their names. [cheers, applause]

21 Now I have some additional questions on
22 this, but I just wanna just... you testified that NYCHA
23 had a meeting with the resident leaders last Tuesday;
24 is that correct?

25

1
2 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: It was actually this
3 past Tuesday.

4 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: This past Tuesday?

5 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Yeah.

6 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So I'm just saying
7 that it's been 16 months since the storm; why did
8 NYCHA wait that long to sit down and bring these
9 folks to the table and explain to them what NYCHA is
10 doing or what it's not doing to address this issue of
11 these temporary boilers?

12 [background comments]

13 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So Tuesday was the most
14 recent meeting we had with resident leadership; as I
15 testified, we have been to many of our developments
16 in the weeks and months after Sandy to provide
17 updates regularly as well.

18 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So what was exactly
19 this past Tuesday; I mean, you mentioned that... was
20 that the first time that all the resident leaders
21 from the impacted buildings met with NYCHA to hear
22 directly from them with regards to what's happening
23 with these temporary boilers?

24 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: As I testified, we have
25 met in different areas of the city; we have had

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2 meetings in the Rockaways, we've had meetings here in
3 the Coney Island area at different developments and
4 have invited all of the resident leaders to those
5 meetings; they were actually public meetings, so all
6 residents were invited; this past Tuesday was
7 specifically for all of the resident leaders for
8 developments who had mobile boilers were invited to
9 that meeting.

10 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I would just like
11 to ask for you to respond to the testimony that we
12 heard from Miss Ilma Joyner, that she observed on a
13 compressor at O'Dwyer Houses a label that read that
14 it should not be operating below 40 degrees and that
15 she witnessed, and I actually witnessed, a small
16 electric heater plugged in to heat this small
17 enclosure. I'd like for you to respond; is that a
18 safe and sound practice on the part of NYCHA to heat
19 these developments?

20 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So with regards to the
21 specific concern regarding the safety of providing
22 portable heaters to thaw out frozen parts and get our
23 boilers back up and running again to provide heat to
24 our residents, I would say absolutely yes, and I say
25 that because as part of those efforts to restore heat

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2 during those extreme weather conditions, a couple of
3 things that we did with regards to that were
4 specifically monitor the emissions within those
5 enclosure to ensure that they stayed within safe
6 limits, we established a health and safety officer
7 for those locations to review the operation and
8 ensure that everything that we were doing while it
9 was being done to expedite the return of heat to our
10 residents, it was being done in a safe way.

11 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Well I'm gonna just
12 disagree with you respectfully with the fact that I
13 don't think that's a safe practice. I think in a
14 city that has a budget of over \$70 billion, to
15 witnesses a boiler powered by a \$10 electric heater
16 is unacceptable to me [applause] and she also
17 mentioned she witnessed kerosene canisters and so
18 forth, so I'm just... I'm not gonna agree with regards
19 to the safety issue.

20 Are there contracts that NYCHA has with
21 these temporary boiler companies with regards to
22 their operation?

23 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Yes.
24
25

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Were they notified that they've been breaking down time and time again across the City?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Are there going to be refunds, repayments given back to NYCHA, given back to the City of New York since these things have been breaking down?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: No.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Why is that?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: The contracts are written... again, these were emergency contracts that were written immediately after Sandy and the contractors were paid to provide the boilers initially, the contractors are paid to... a monthly rental fee for those mobile boilers and the contractors are paid to respond to any malfunctions or outages associated with those boilers.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: How much are we paying each month per temporary boiler?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: The current rental for mobile boilers, of all of the mobile boilers that we have right now, currently is approximately \$1 million a month.

[background comments]

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So we're paying \$1 million a month... we're paying \$1 million a month for... [interpose, background comment] we're paying \$1 million a month for products that are breaking down on an ongoing basis; you see no problem with this, sir?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Boilers by their nature, elements of all boiler systems, these mobile boilers are no different from the boiler systems that we have in our basements that break down on a regular basis. As I testified, the difference here with the mobile boilers is, ideally, in an ideal scenario, when you design a boiler, you build in redundancy so that if a component fails you could continue to provide that heat and hot water without an issue. These mobile boilers, because of when they were put in, the circumstances that we were under, do not have that redundancy. So I would not say that the failure rate, if you will or the maintenance calls associated with these mobile boilers is significantly different from a regular boiler that we have in any one of NYCHA's developments today.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I would like if NYCHA could submit those contracts with the mobile boiler companies to this Committee as well... [interpose]

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We'd be glad to.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: because I don't know if they were made in Texas, but New York does experience weather under 40 degrees and if there is a label on it... on any part of this boiler that says it should not operate below 40 degrees, it behooves me why we're installing them here when we experience 5-degree, 0-degree weather and whatever efforts NYCHA might've undertaken to enclose it to keep it warm enough, to me was simply not adequate and simply not acceptable.

I would like to move on to what is coming in spring of 2014. If I hear correctly, that there's gonna be a replacement of some sort of these temporary boilers; can you speak to that please?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Yes. So as I just indicated, the mobile boilers that we have out there today are of sufficient horsepower to provide the necessary heat and hot water for the developments; however, there is no redundancy at a lot of these

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2 developments, so what we've done is we've designed
3 new mobile boiler systems that will replace these;
4 they will run off of natural gas, which will be
5 cheaper and more sustainable, better for the
6 environment; the systems will have that redundancy
7 built in so that the systems can be taken down for
8 regular maintenance; if they go down because of a
9 malfunction, the residents are less likely to be
10 impacted by that. In addition to that, because these
11 new mobile boiler systems will be procured in a more
12 competitive environment rather in an emergency
13 situation, the monthly rental and costs associated
14 with those systems will go down significantly as
15 well.

16 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And who's paying
17 for these new systems?

18 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We anticipate that all
19 of these systems are eligible for insurance and/or
20 FEMA reimbursement.

21 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: You anticipate, so
22 you're not certain?

23 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Until we get funding
24 from those sources, we're not certain of anything,
25 no.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: But you're moving forward with this plan?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Correct, we have had discussions with the insurance companies and with FEMA with regards to this and they have indicated that these are eligible expenses.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Because you mentioned before that the reason why you're not moving forward with permanent boilers is because you're not certain of what funds you're gonna have, but you're moving forward on these things with uncertainty with the funds as well; am I correct?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: That's correct.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I think that's a problem and I would like to also make a note that, you know these contracts I find problematic in the fact that we are paying a company these... whether it's emergency contract or not, we're paying a company for a product; they're not working; what refunds... what is the damage, you know that we must collect from them for faulty products, that they're breaking down and I would hope that in the next series of contracts with these temporary boilers in the spring that are supposedly more reliable, that there's language in

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2 that contract that says if they're not working you're
3 not getting paid and we want money back. And I will
4 tell you that this Committee... and both Committees are
5 very eager... interested in getting our hands on both
6 of these contracts, both the one with the current
7 emergenc... you know, the one we have with your
8 temporary boilers now and with your insurance
9 companies. Now you mentioned that with regards to
10 the more permanent boilers, that could be a two-year,
11 possibly two-year process; is that correct?

12 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: That's correct.

13 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Is that gonna be
14 subject to a ULURP?

15 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: At this point we do not
16 believe so, no.

17 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Because if you're
18 saying that there are gonna environmental reviews
19 needed, it is my sense that there's going to be some
20 sort of an official review process from the City of
21 New York; no?

22 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: ULURP... I don't believe
23 the ULURP process would apply with regards to
24 installing additional infrastructure on public
25 housing property.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And do you have a detailed report that you could give us with regards to what these structures look like, where they'll be placed; how will they impact NYCHA buildings; how might that impact NYCHA families with regards to space in NYCHA developments? Do you have a detailed... because, you know, I'm always... you know I like pictures but the devil's in the details. [applause]

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Completely agree; what we've developed, a concept for where we think they serve well, where they fit best; however, before we move forward with any detailed designs we would go through a formal resident engagement process, sharing those concepts and ultimately developing those from concept plans to detailed designs.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I would anticipate that we will get a detailed report of these permanent boilers and that NYCHA will do all that it can to do proper outreach to the affected communities to hear their thoughts and their concerns.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Absolutely.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Now you mentioned that you only received \$3 million out of \$150 million from FEMA that you applied?

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2 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So the 100... just to be
3 clear, the \$150 million is what we estimate that we
4 may receive; it's not necessarily what ultimately,
5 you know we will apply for. With FEMA you actually
6 apply for a lot more than that and FEMA makes
7 deductions for any insurance that we may get. So we
8 would actually be applying to FEMA in that scenario
9 for hundreds of millions of dollars and then they
10 would subtract out any insurance that they project
11 that we would get. But to answer your question more
12 directly, yes, we have only to date received \$3
13 million from FEMA.

14 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Because there's a
15 lot of misleading information out there in the public
16 and it's getting... you know, it's getting confusing
17 and irritating, to be honest with you, because it is
18 my understanding that you have received \$108 million
19 from HUD; is that correct?

20 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: The \$108 million from
21 HUD was the funding that was allocated in tranche one
22 that became available to NYCHA in January of this
23 year.

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And what is being
25 done with that money?

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2 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: That money was
3 specifically programmed to provide emergency power
4 backup at as many of our developments as possible,
5 approximately 100 buildings.

6 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And out of that
7 money, how much has been spent thus far?

8 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We have retained the
9 design firms to prepare the necessary designs; again,
10 that started in January when we received that
11 funding; those designs should be completed in the
12 next month or so that we could go to bid and actually
13 go into construction of that.

14 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And how much do you
15 anticipate that cost will be?

16 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We are trying to use
17 every penny of the allocated \$108 million; the need
18 bar exceeds that \$108 million, but we are expecting
19 that we will be able to provide emergency power
20 backup to approximately 100 buildings with that \$108
21 million.

22 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And that's gonna
23 come out of the total \$400 million that's needed to
24 repair generators and boilers?
25

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: RAYMOND RIBEIRO:

That's above and beyond the \$400 million. I wanna be clear, the \$400 million that I described before is to take our infrastructure as it exists today and simply replace everything that got damaged in exactly the same way, in exactly the same place as it is today and does not include the costs that we've incurred to date for our immediate response to Sandy, which is nearly \$200 million.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So just to be clear, let the public hear, that when Washington D.C. says that they've allocated the impacted states and localities over \$60 billion, what you're saying is that we don't have that money in our possession right now in New York City; is that correct?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: At public housing the only money that we have received was \$187 million from insurance, \$3 million from FEMA and \$108 million programmed for emergency power backup; our immediate response to Sandy cost us nearly \$200 million, so in essence, we have just broken even.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So we are not in possession of all the money that is rightfully owed to us from Washington; is that correct?

1 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: That is correct.

2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And that is a very
3 important thing for us, for this Committee and both
4 Committees to be aware of, because we're gonna have
5 to work with our partners in Washington to make sure
6 that that money gets flowed down here. But I will
7 tell you, that as soon as these committees wrap up,
8 we will be working with all levels of government, the
9 City Comptroller and beyond, to make sure that we
10 look at those contracts with the insurance companies,
11 because they have money that is rightfully owed to
12 the folks here at NYCHA and if we get that money
13 we'll get the repairs that we desperately need.
14 [applause] In the interest of time, I will move on
15 to hear my colleagues as well.

16 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I actually have...
17 before I move on to my colleague, Council Member
18 Menchaca, I do have one more question, 'cause I
19 wanna... you're striving for resiliency...

20 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Yes.

21 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: but it's the
22 question mark around funding that's keeping you from
23 replacing these boilers?

24 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Correct.
25

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Question mark about whether you're gonna receive all of it or most of it or some of it, but at what point do you say we're not gonna get all the funding we need, but we have to do something; at what point does the uncertainty around funding no longer be an excuse for no action at all?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So any action plan, the work that we propose doing, the \$1.8 billion worth of work that we propose doing, is actually broken into several different buckets of work that we would like to do, but... and we've tried to prioritize that work. So as an example, that \$1.8 billion includes funding to make some of our developments that are now in the new flood zones more resilient. Obviously though our focus will be on the developments that need to be restored in a permanent nature. So we are, as I said before, at this point, pleased with the recent progress when it comes to discussions regarding the boilers, or cautiously optimistic is perhaps a better word, and therefore not ready to throw in the towel and say that we're gonna put the boilers back in the basements.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: But will there come a point at which you will say we're not getting the

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2 funds... all the funds that we need, let's make the
3 best possible use of the funds that we have now and
4 do something about these boilers; will that point
5 come or you're just gonna wait for funding that may
6 never come?

7 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: No, I think that point
8 has to come.

9 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Council Member
10 Menchaca.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Thank you
12 Chairs. I just wanna say thank you Mr. Ribeiro, Mr.
13 Laboy-Diaz for coming in and testifying before us; we
14 look forward to continuing this conversation in true
15 partnership in making sure that we resolve these
16 issues. So I just wanna say thank you again to Mr.
17 Ribeiro and Mr. Laboy-Diaz. So my question, and this
18 is a specific Red Hook question; something that I
19 experienced firsthand moments after the FDNY
20 responded, was the boiler that burnt down outside of
21 the Dwight-Richards Towers in Red Hood West; can you
22 give us a report about how that happened and how we
23 are addressing that on the system-wide with your
24 boilers system-wide and more particularly, how the
25 current plan for replacing the boilers will address

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2 that issue particularly? Just for quick clarity,
3 residents called the office and alerted that there
4 were beeping sounds from these boilers, I guess which
5 were overheating, without any kind of surveillance
6 from NYCHA and so, I kinda want you to tell us what
7 happened, how you addressed it and how these new
8 boilers that you've designed are gonna be safer?

9 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So with regard to that
10 specific incident, there are... the boiler is just one
11 component of the whole, well the heating system;
12 included in that system in that package are a number
13 of pumps, motors, compressors; in that particular
14 case, right, all of that equipment requires
15 electricity, which is provided via panels located
16 throughout the system; in that particular case an
17 electric panel that was providing service to a
18 compressor within the unit arced and caught fire, and
19 that was the cause for that particular incident. I
20 would say all of our mobile boilers are monitored; we
21 do not have staff at each mobile boiler, but there
22 are roving crews that monitor each and every one of
23 those mobile boilers, you know, throughout the day.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: And further on
25 safety, are you... can you tell us, the Council and the

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2 residents here, how you're monitoring the safety of
3 the water standards that are coming out of our
4 boilers?

5 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So the boilers, just to
6 be clear, right, the boilers are a closed system, so
7 any water that's provided in the system to generate
8 steam, it remains within the system, but there are
9 regular water treatment processes that we undergo at
10 all of our boiler locations to ensure... it's actually
11 done a number of reasons; one being, you know it
12 helps the boiler actually run more effectively and
13 efficiently, but that is being done as well, yes.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: And are those
15 reports of water testing provided to residents?

16 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Again, the water is
17 treated, as we do with any of our boiler systems, but
18 the water is not necessarily tested. It is not water
19 that is being used for drinking or bathing, it does
20 not get into the drinking water, it's not potable
21 water.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Okay. I mean I
23 think that we're gonna hear more from residents about
24 that issue and I'm hoping residents can talk a little
25 bit about the information that... whether or not it's

an issue to NYCHA, it is a piece of information and communication that they'd like, so I'm hoping that you can hear that and respond.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: That's it for me.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you Council Member Menchaca. Just for the sake of clarity; has NYCHA done any water quality testing in the impacted developments that were hurt by Sandy?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And what have the results showed?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I didn't bring those results with me, as it wasn't really a boiler-related issue. But all of the results of those tests have found that there were no issues in the water volume. [interpose]

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Because some folks have complained to me about the water tasting funny, color's off; I would like for our Committee to get a hold of those water quality results. [interpose]

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We could provide that data.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Next we have up Council Member Donovan Richards.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Thank you. Thank you. Thank you for coming to testify today; I also just wanna thank Brian Honan, who's been very responsive to my office during the last few months and weeks obviously when we've dealt with a lot of issues. My question, as the Chair of Environmental Protection, I am very interested in knowing about air quality and I know that these boilers give off something called nitrogen oxide and want to know... I know there were some issues with air quality at some developments and wanted to know what were those issues and how did you guys deal with them? So I'll start with that question first.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So just to be clear, all of our boilers and the exhaust associated with our boilers are in complete conformance with the building requirements for stats and the like, we have, especially... or I should say, more frequently, when they first went in, gotten complaints from residents with regards to the direction of the exhaust and have in some cases redirected that exhaust where possible; it is one of the things that

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2 we have looked at in the design of the more
3 permanent, if you will, mobile boiler systems that
4 we're getting ready to put in; that was one of the
5 things specifically we wanted to tighten up, but
6 other than that, there are no other air quality
7 issues associated with the boilers.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: So you're
9 sayin' there were no air quality issues with these
10 boilers. And are you guys... so who monitors the air
11 quality of these boilers; are you guys workin'... I
12 don't know if you work DEP or do you have your own
13 division; I wanted to know, do you... you know, who's
14 monitoring the air quality?

15 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Yeah, all of the
16 boilers, as you've described, are permitted; DEP does
17 monitor that, so the boilers are permitted and the
18 monitoring is done just as though it was any other
19 boiler.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: By who?

21 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: DE... I believe it is
22 DEP. Yeah.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: So DEP oversees
24 that. Do you guys have any air monitors at any
25 particular sites now, especially in light of the

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2 temporary boilers? Because what I'm getting at is,
3 if we're dealing... if my constituents and residents of
4 Coney Island are dealing... are inhaling the smog, we
5 wanna make sure that's not havin' any adverse effects
6 on their health, and I think that one of the things
7 that we're not dealing with is the health, the mold,
8 you know obviously that many residents have dealt
9 with, but obviously Sandy has exacerbated this issue
10 and we wanna make sure that, you know although our
11 residents are not the highest, you know income
12 earning folk in New York City, that they are being
13 respected and treated in a certain fashion, so I
14 wanna know, do you guys have, with all of the
15 complaints that are coming in about the smog, are you
16 guys really making a real attempt to monitor the air?

17 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So as I said, the
18 complaints were actually, you know, exaggerated, if
19 you will, or higher initially; currently we actually
20 do not have any outstanding complaints with regards
21 to the air quality on our mobile boilers and as a
22 result we do not have any permanent air quality
23 monitoring at the mobile boiler sites.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: The other
25 question I have, and I'm gonna end on this, because I

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2 think that we need to certainly look at that and I'm
3 gonna certainly work with DEP and the new
4 commissioner to make sure that there's more
5 monitoring done the right way. How long ago did you
6 find out you were coming to testify today about
7 boilers?

8 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I guess I heard that
9 there was a potential hearing a few weeks ago maybe;
10 I don't know exactly.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: The reason I'm
12 sayin' that is I find it absolutely disrespectful to
13 this body, very disgusting that you could not come
14 with any facts on how much it would cost to repair
15 boilers [applause] for residents who are affected in
16 these areas. You should have come with facts and you
17 know, I understand that the big number is \$400
18 million, but I find it very disrespectful and I would
19 urge you to get those numbers and... because what it's
20 showing is that NYCHA is not taking this issue
21 seriously, [background comments] because you should
22 know how much it's gonna cost to get these boilers up
23 and running, because residents have no heat and
24 adequate hot water and I find it very disrespectful
25 that you came today without any real figures on how

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2 much it's gonna cost to get this done. I would urge
3 you next time, if you get weeks and especially weeks
4 in advance notice that you come with accurate
5 numbers, because how are we supposed to know in this
6 body, should we approach the Mayor and say hey,
7 should you we some more money in the budget for this;
8 we have no numbers.

9 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Councilman, if I could
10 just... I... and perhaps I wasn't clear in my response
11 with regards to that, right. So we have detailed
12 information for each of our developments as to what
13 the repair costs will be, what the resiliency costs
14 will be, right. I know that at this particular
15 development, at Carey Gardens, our estimated repair
16 cost is \$39 million... [interpose]

17 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Great.

18 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I need another \$11
19 million on top of that to pro... [interpose]

20 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: To repair the
21 boiler, you're sayin' 39... [crosstalk]

22 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: to provide... to provide
23 the resiliency that we're proposing. My point before
24 was, that \$39 million and that \$11 million for Carey
25 Gardens specifically includes the boiler systems, the

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2 electrical systems, the lobbies, the apartments,
3 everything that was impacted by the storm and it's
4 difficult to break out the boiler specifically
5 because the boiler room is tied into the electrical
6 system and it's tied into... right, there are a number
7 of systems that ultimately come together, so I have
8 to do work in the basement; is that a boiler cost or
9 is that an electrical cost? So we definitely have
10 that cost breakdown by development, but it's just
11 difficult to break out specifically the boiler.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: I agree; I hear
13 you loud and clear and I'm very grateful for you
14 clearin' that up. If you can get us a breakdown of
15 how much it's going to cost by developments, that
16 would be much appreciated. And once again, I thank
17 you for certainly coming to testify and we look
18 forward to seeing those breakdowns. [interpose]

19 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We have met with
20 several council members and have shared that
21 information on a development by development basis and
22 we... [interpose]

23 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Well that
24 wasn't shared with me, so I...

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: we... we would be happy to share it with the entire...

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Okay.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: both committees.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Okay, great; thank you so much.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you Councilman Richards and I definitely would like for both of our committees to get that information, a detailed breakdown per development with regards to boilers, generators, every... every bit of information helps us make better decisions moving forward, just like it would for you.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: And we would appreciate the support; we will get you that data, absolutely.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right. Next up I have here is Council Member Chin.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you Chair. I know that NYCHA has met with me and we also went to review all the capital needs in my district in the development and that's very helpful, so Chair, I do encourage that everyone, you know all the council members that have development in a district do that.

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2 And I wanted to go back again to the
3 whole issue about urgency. You talk about short
4 terms, which is just improving, you know bringing in
5 new mobile boilers that are better, right, they're
6 running on natural gas; it's better than the ones we
7 have now. But when you're talking about the one with
8 really the solution, the long-term solution, I think
9 we do need the costs, you know for these; I remember
10 last year when we did the tour of Red Hook and I
11 remember you guys were very... the staff was very
12 enthusiastic to talk about what they can do with the
13 resiliency, even like putting in recycled garbage
14 chutes, so there are a lot of things that we can do.
15 So I think that we need the numbers and see how we
16 can push our federal elected official and also our
17 mayor, the administration to work wit NYCHA to try to
18 get these things done. You know, if you're talking
19 about in... right here, Carey Gardens, that is \$50
20 million, right?

21 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: That's correct.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Well, maybe we need
23 to do something here with that money, that the City
24 can do something to at least get it started, right,
25 we need to see some progress so if we know the dollar

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2 figure we could start at one development and then
3 move on to the others. Or if we could get more
4 money, we can start at two development; I mean we
5 know what the needs are. So I really do encourage
6 you to give us a detailed information and let's put
7 some urgency in this, 'cause I just don't think that
8 we should have... you know, weather another winter with
9 these temporary boilers, if we have some solution
10 that can help us long-term and it will save us money
11 too. So I really encourage that we look at doing
12 that and working together and making this happen.

13 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We will share that
14 data, absolutely. Thank you. [interpose]

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Alright. Thank you
16 Chair.

17 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Actually I know
18 Council Member Mendez has to go, so I wanna give her
19 a chance to ask a few questions and Council Member
20 Mendez actually chaired the first three committee
21 hearings on Resiliency and Public Housing, so she has
22 a unique perspective to offer.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Thank you Mr.
24 Chair and thank you to my colleagues. In one of the
25 previous hearings held by this committee, the numbers

1
2 to do the repairs was \$600 million and the number to
3 do the resiliency needed was \$1.8 million; I'm now
4 hearing \$400 million and \$1.2 billion, so what is the
5 discrepancy in those numbers?

6 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So there are a lot of
7 different numbers that get tossed about in terms of
8 available Sandy recovery and a lot of that has to do
9 with what you define as resiliency, what do you
10 define as a routine repair; what do you define as
11 mitigation; which programs that are "have to have"
12 and which are programs that we are proposing, but
13 don't have any confidence or a lot of confidence that
14 will ultimately get approved. As I said, our entire
15 ask, if you will, that's identified and outlined in
16 the Action Plan is \$1.8 billion; of that \$1.8 billion
17 I think we have testified at previous hearings,
18 right, some of our programs include hardening our
19 community centers so that they could serve as command
20 posts or information centers, right; there is a cost
21 of several hundred million dollars associated with
22 that work. I talked earlier about the costs
23 associated with doing work at some of the
24 developments that weren't necessarily damaged, but
25 are now in vulnerable areas, according to the new

1
2 flood plains. So those are all components that make
3 up the \$1.8 billion, but specifically for the 34
4 developments that sustained significant damage after
5 Sandy, we have identified \$400 million as the minimum
6 repair costs for those, and again, that does not
7 include the \$200 million that we have spent agency-
8 wide to this day on just getting us to where we are
9 today; does not include any of that; \$400 million for
10 the basic repairs with a total of about \$660 million
11 if we were to do some of the concepts that you see in
12 front of you -- the raised boiler rooms and the more
13 resiliency -- there are additional programs beyond
14 that that were described -- the emergency generators
15 are not included in that \$660 million. Ideally, in
16 the Action Plan, we talk about \$250 million for that
17 agency-wide. So that's why there's a lot of
18 different numbers that are thrown out; they're really
19 all just subsets of one another.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: How much money
21 did you request after Irene and how much of that
22 money did you get and when did you get it?

23 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I apologize, but I
24 don't have any information on the funding on Irene.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Okay. So without
3 the specifics, using Irene as a basis for Sandy, are
4 you thinking we'll see any of this money to really
5 make this two-year boiler replacement a reality?

6 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So I think Sandy was
7 slightly different... I mean Irene was slightly
8 different in that all we had was insurance and FEMA
9 and in this particular case with Sandy we have CDBG
10 money, which is very, very visible, very, very
11 public, so I am, again, guardedly optimistic that
12 because of that we will be in better shape, and quite
13 frankly, Sandy is a lot more visible and people are
14 payin' a lot more attention to Sandy than they were
15 after Irene.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: If I can ask you,
17 what was replaced during Irene that was damaged again
18 during Sandy and what types of things were re-
19 damaged, like electrical boilers...

20 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So that's actually a
21 very good point. We have a number of locations,
22 actually one here in Coney I... I think it's Coney
23 Island Houses, that was impacted on Irene, the
24 electrical switch gear in the basement was flooded,
25 was subsequently replaced with FEMA money, FEMA and

1 insurance money as a result of the Irene event; when
2 Sandy came along, that brand new electrical switch
3 gear, because it wasn't done in the way... in a more
4 resilient way like we're proposing now, that same
5 equipment was flooded and is now in need of replacing
6 again.
7

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Okay, thank you.
9 My last question... and... and thank you once again, is;
10 on the first page of your testimony you say you have
11 very clear plans to permanently replace the mobile
12 boilers; you said you shared these plans with the
13 residents; is this a written plan?

14 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: As an example, on
15 Tuesday we actually did a PowerPoint presentation and
16 again, the intent of that was to provide concepts; we
17 talked about what some of the potential new boiler
18 rooms would look like, we talked about some of our
19 more advanced ideas, like you know if we could put
20 new facades, insulated facades on our buildings, not
21 only could we take care of the building facades and
22 maintain our infrastructure, but we could reduce the
23 heat load, because our buildings don't currently have
24 any insulation. So that façade would provide
25 insulation, it would potentially reduce our heat load

1
2 by 33 percent and instead of putting six boilers in
3 that development I could do that same work with four
4 boilers. Those are some of the ideas that we're
5 proposing, those are some of the things and ideas
6 that we have shared with the resident leadership and
7 those are the ideas that we want to move forward
8 with.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: So you have a
10 PowerPoint presentation; that's what you have?

11 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We had provided one to
12 the residents on Tuesday, yes.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: I can't help but
14 make the analogy that VCG was also a PowerPoint
15 presentation, but anyway. Will we get a copy of
16 that, will the City Council and this committee get a
17 copy of that PowerPoint? [interpose]

18 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I would be happy to
19 share it with the City Council.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Thank you very
21 much and thank you Chairs.

22 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you Council
23 Member Mendez. I wanna give Council Member Cumbo a
24 chance to ask a few questions.
25

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you very
3 much for your testimony. We are here predominantly
4 because heat and hot water are really a matter of
5 life and death in below zero temperatures and as we
6 see the snowstorm that is coming down right now, I'm
7 sure we all can't help but think about what is that
8 going to mean for all of the residents here tonight
9 that are going to continue to have these persistent
10 challenges. I wanted to ask in terms of the decision
11 that was made to buy the mobile boiler system that
12 was put in place; are there temporary mobile boiler
13 systems that operate in conditions below 40 degrees;
14 was there an option to purchase one or the other and
15 for whatever reason, the option to purchase the one
16 that would break down in temperatures below 40
17 degrees was the one that was selected?

18 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So as I testified, we
19 took every mobile boiler that we could get our hands
20 on immediately after Sandy. But I do need to say;
21 mobile boilers are intended to operate in all kinds
22 of weather conditions, so some of the mobile boilers
23 that we have have been used in places like Wisconsin,
24 right, because we've had these conversations with the
25 mobile boiler manufacturers and suppliers; they have

1 oil boilers and they travel the country with them.
2 So a mobile boiler in and of itself is intended to be
3 used outside in areas where it's cold. Now the
4 individual components of a mobile boiler; a lot of
5 reference was made to a specific compressor that's
6 rated for a particular temperature; that makes
7 perfect sense, 'cause remember, what we're doing with
8 the mobile boiler is, we're taking water and we're
9 heating it and making steam, so it kinda goes without
10 saying that in freezing conditions that presents an
11 issue. That being said, the systems are designed to
12 operate in conditions like New York, so there was not
13 a conscious decision to pick one particular mobile
14 boiler versus another. There is no such thing as a
15 cold weather mobile boiler versus a warm weather
16 mobile boiler.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: That would seem to
19 make sense to me, but let me ask you; throughout the
20 City there were other buildings that are city-owned
21 that were also impacted by this storm; do you know of
22 any other city-owned buildings that also needed
23 boiler replacements that did not use this particular
24 system; do you know if there were, for other city-
25 owned buildings, opportunities to utilize a different

boiler system in order to get those particular buildings back up to speed; do you know of that?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I know, in conversations with my counterparts in other city agencies...

COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Yes.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I know that they are experiencing exactly the same issues that we are when it comes to maintenance, when it comes to operation; even when it comes down to the funding... [interpose]

COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: But do you know if they chose other boiler systems other than the one that was chosen here? Because what I'm trying to get at is... [interpose]

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: They're all the... they're all the same.

COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I'm trying to understand if there were, because of the communities that are represented in public housing, was there a conscious decision to purchase boilers that were inadequate, that they knew had the potential very likely to break down, because as you see, we're in New York City, it's a very cold city, and were there decisions made purposed or intentionally to get a

cheaper model that would not service these communities adequately?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Absolutely not.

[applause]

COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I just want to remind you and I wholeheartedly believe the testimony of the panel that was before and that this panel is one that is under oath and we take that very seriously at the Council, for a number of reasons; I also wanna bring to your attention here, in your testimony you say, on Page 4, "the mobile boilers are just as effective at producing steam heat as regular boilers and have sufficient capacity to serve the needs of the developments. For this reason, residents may experience fluctuations in heat distribution. By separately tracking heat and hot water complaints related to the mobile boilers, we determined that there is a minor difference in the number of complaints received about them. We attribute this slight difference to the extremely cold weather we've experienced this year." So either what's happening here is that you are extremely detached from the reality of what is happening here [applause, cheers] or you're trying to paint a

1
2 picture that is very unrealistic and very unfair
3 [applause] to those that are here today.

4 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I think the picture
5 that we want to paint is that from a purely technical
6 perspective, right, when we talk about horsepower and
7 generation of steam, those mobile boilers are... meet
8 or exceed the required capacities for them; that's
9 one of the things we did in the dead of night after
10 Sandy was, determine how much horsepower do we need,
11 how much horsepower do we have right now in those
12 flooded boilers and therefore, I need to find mobile
13 boilers that are equal to in excess of that
14 particular horsepower, and that's what we have now.
15 The picture that we are trying to paint there is, we
16 have to remember that these mobile boilers are
17 providing steam into a distribution system that
18 begins in the basement of these buildings; that
19 distribution system was exposed to that same
20 flooding. So as an example, we have electronic
21 control valves that automatically adjust the amount
22 of steam that goes up and down into the apartments;
23 all of that equipment was under water, all of that
24 equipment does not work, all of that... [crosstalk]

25 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Understood.

1
2 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: equipment needs to be
3 replaced, so in the interim the mobile boilers that
4 are outside are pumping steam into those distribution
5 systems, but it now requires manual effort to adjust
6 and literally turn valves in the basement to put more
7 or less steam into the individual lines.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Now let me ask
9 you, so the insurance agencies, HUD, all of the
10 different pools of funding that you're looking to
11 receive funding from, right, you're saying that they
12 wanna see repairs done to these boilers; have they
13 come out to the site with engineers, with skilled
14 individuals that understand the capability of a
15 boiler being repaired or not or are they taking you
16 at your word; has this type of on-site review from
17 these different firms, companies, agencies; have they
18 reviewed for themselves and seen the circumstances
19 and situations and then made the determination that
20 minor or serious repair needs to be made or none at
21 all?

22 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Representatives from
23 insurance companies, engineers that had been retained
24 by insurance companies, FEMA and the engineers that
25 they have on their staff, along with NYCHA staff and

1
2 all the support that we have, have been to these
3 locations numerous times; NYCHA, along with several
4 other city agencies, with the support of City Hall,
5 has actually retained independent certified boiler
6 experts to go and do independent assessments of these
7 boilers in an effort to ultimately convince those
8 agencies that these boilers need to be replaced. As
9 I said before, they have not committed to that yet;
10 however, at least on the FEMA end we are guardedly
11 optimistic that we are gonna ultimately get FEMA's
12 approval for replacement rather than repair.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: That was a bit
14 confusing for me, but I'm gonna take you at that. My
15 final question with this is, knowing that they were
16 going to purchase mobile boilers that potentially
17 have the opportunity to break down if temperatures
18 reached below 40 degrees and knowing that New York
19 City is traditionally a city that goes at zero or
20 below during the wintertime, I just wanna bring it
21 very close to home in this way. With the lack of
22 funding being distributed; with the fact that many of
23 these resiliency programs may not be realized for
24 another two years, has there been any thought that
25 you all have put into what happens if a baby freezes

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2 to death, a senior freezes to death, individuals get
3 sick from the mold that could come up not just now,
4 but generations from now, when people understand that
5 they have had these different types of ailments that
6 have resulted as a result of the lack of cleaning and
7 removing of the mold and the fact that people could
8 die during this time period that they are waiting for
9 this level of service; have you all put any thought
10 into that? What is your thought process around the
11 fact that people could experience very serious
12 conditions as a result of this; some could be fatal?

13 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Of course, right, we... I
14 understand; I'll speak personally, I understand that
15 the services that we're providing, the services that
16 we're talking about here are critical services to
17 provide critical services to residents in their
18 homes, I understand that; everything we do, all of
19 the actions that we've taken are to ensure that our
20 residents get as little interruption in these
21 critical services as possible. Absolutely.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Just have a couple
24 of follow-up questions on that. Mr. Ribeiro, you
25 testified that immediately following or during, after

1
2 Superstorm Sandy that NYCHA was scrambling to find
3 temporary boilers; is that correct?

4 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I'm not sure I used the
5 word scrambling, but I'll go with that; that's fine.

6 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: 'Kay. So we're
7 basically... what we're hearing is that NYCHA was not
8 prepared for Superstorm Sandy and there was a storm
9 the previous year, Irene, which you admitted, you
10 know, that there was damage done to some of our NYCHA
11 buildings as well, so were there any... obviously not
12 enough lessons learned from Irene to Sandy and we're
13 now a year, over a year past Sandy; are we taking
14 precautions and measures to make sure that these
15 types of problems never happen again?

16 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Absolutely. First of
17 all, I don't think anybody was prepared for what the
18 city as a whole experienced after Sandy. I don't
19 know that it's a fair comparison to say that because
20 we went through Irene we should have been able to
21 contemplate what happened in Sandy; two significantly
22 different storms, significantly different impacts. I
23 would also say that NYCHA was in exactly the same
24 position as not only my partners in other city
25 agencies, but many of the private landlords and

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2 property owners in New York City were scrambling to
3 find mobile boilers as well. With regards to that,
4 we've acknowledged and in previous hearings have
5 talked about the lessons that we've learned as a
6 result of Sandy; we have done a number of things to
7 put ourselves in a position to be able to respond
8 better; I think we've acknowledged some of our
9 shortcomings as a result of Sandy; we've implemented
10 a number of measures to address those, including, as
11 an example, emergency type contracts where we are
12 guaranteed delivery of specific equipment, such as
13 generators or pumps, different equipment that would
14 be necessary as a result of a future disaster. So
15 again, we've discussed those details in previous
16 hearings; we'd be more than happy to share those
17 lessons learned again with the Council and the new
18 Committee, but we've acknowledged and we believe that
19 we're better off today than we were then.

20 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I mean... I... I
21 appreciate your comments, but the reason why I asked
22 this is because under the previous administration
23 they acknowledge that, you know, climate change is
24 real, they acknowledge that we have a higher risk of
25 severe weather, severe storms, abnormal hurricanes,

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2 abnormal coastal storms, but we're a coastal city; as
3 a matter of fact, they gave pamphlets out about being
4 prepared, readiness, about evacuation centers,
5 evacuation zones; the fact that, you know we really
6 have to get to the heart of this about preparedness
7 and to make sure that we are really adjusting and
8 modifying our game plan in dealing with emergencies,
9 particularly in NYCHA developments, because there are
10 other folks who might have the resources to pick up
11 and leave to west, but folks here have a difficult
12 time leaving in the event of an emergency, so we have
13 to plan for this, sir; this is crucial and so I just
14 wanna make that point.

15 Now schools were damaged by Sandy as
16 well, one in Coney Island, PS 329, they're running on
17 a temporary boiler; to date I have not heard problems
18 with that temporary boiler; what coordination or
19 discussions have you had with the DOE discussing what
20 boilers they're using and why aren't we using the
21 ones they're using?

22 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So we... I actually... I
23 recently sat on a panel to discuss the impacts of
24 Sandy to New York City; that panel included
25 representatives from a number of city agencies,

1 including DEP, MTA; SCA, and so we have all shared
2 our experiences as a result of Sandy and as I
3 indicated a little earlier, I would say that the SCA
4 has exactly the same issues that we have with regards
5 to the boilers. I think the major difference there
6 is, we need to remember that the buildings that we're
7 talking about are people's homes, they don't go home
8 at the end of the day, right, they are home. So I
9 think that could be one of the reasons that you
10 don't, you know, hear the issues that go in schools,
11 'cause at 5:00 everybody's out of that building. We
12 don't have that case, so it makes our job even more
13 difficult, we understand that.

15 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: But what I'm saying
16 is that if we're getting reports of some temporary
17 boilers that seem to be working properly, then we
18 need to share that information amongst different
19 agencies and obviously those that are not working
20 properly should never be contracted with the City of
21 New York ever again. That's my point; we should be
22 keeping tabs on which boilers are working, [clapping]
23 which are not and we should never... and quite frankly,
24 I'm still gonna be on this insurance issue, because I
25 want them exposed, 'cause maybe we should not be

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2 doing business with them either, the City of New
3 York. [applause] Now with regards to dealing with
4 the emergency, and I can speak this because I was
5 personally there; when there was a crisis at O'Dwyer
6 with no heat; no hot water, NYCHA did send folks from
7 Family Services to knock on doors, but I will tell
8 you that there were no translators; you know, we are
9 a very diverse city and there was not staff there
10 that spoke different languages to inform them of a
11 warming center here at Carey Gardens. Can you speak
12 to the diversity or the different languages that are
13 spoken when times of emergency and crisis occur at
14 NYCHA developments?

15 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: Good afternoon,
16 Carlos Laboy-Diaz... [interpose]

17 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you for being
18 here.

19 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: Thank you for your
20 cooperation. We have in Coney Island several
21 employees that speak Russian, Chinese and Spanish;
22 there's not enough. We're in the process of
23 procuring additional local housing with some of those
24 skills; I have three Russian-speaking, I have one in
25 O'Dwyer, one in Carey and one in Surfside. For the

Chinese speaking housing in Carey and another that speaks Spanish. We also have a number [off mic]; we have a number that [off mic]... [interpose]

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Can you please speak into the mic; I'm sorry; we just... hard time hearing you.

CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: Also we have a committee number that employees can use; if a tenant goes to the office and we cannot speak their language they can call to get interpreter; that is a system that we use. During emergencies we try to reach all our employees to come to the property on a system to that communication.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So you mentioned that you do have a Russian translator at O'Dwyer; is that correct?

CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: We have three housing assistants that speak Russian in the Coney Island area; we have one in O'Dwyer, we have one in Carey and we have one in Surfside.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Well sir, with all due respect, I did not see that person when I went to O'Dwyer myself and that's when my staff and I had to help NYCHA translate information, 'cause I speak

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2 Russian and my staff member Dior [phonetic] was
3 there, but no one from NYCHA was there to help
4 translate information and there were folks who spoke
5 Spanish or Chinese and it was very hard to
6 communicate, but we tried our best. I do think that...
7 if you're saying that there is a need for additional
8 translators, NYCHA needs to make that a priority,
9 because the reality is we're a very diverse city and
10 NYCHA should be reflecting that.

11 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: We agree and actually
12 I was reminded that we posted... we created a flyer
13 that was translated in those languages that I
14 mentioned.

15 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Okay. But to me,
16 sir, during times of emergency, I think flyer's not
17 enough; we need live bodies, people that could speak
18 the different languages of our city and give people
19 the right and correct information. We're dealing
20 with senior citizens... what I witnessed that night I
21 never want to witness again -- grandmothers in
22 freezing cold, wearing three or four blankets with
23 their ovens on, crying and screaming that they're
24 freezing cold and they could not shower for two days.

I never wanna see this again anywhere in the City of New York. [applause] [background comment]

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: More questions. I'm gonna give... [background comment] yes, go ahead.

CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: We... we wanna recognize the fact that when we identify witness with a Russian translation, we call your office for help... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yeah.

CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: we also wanna recognize that in the past, personally I remember [off mic] Houses [off mic] with her help we were able to reach more tenants. I wanna recognize that.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Alright. And I do recognize, you did call... reach out and I appreciate the fact that you recognized and you called my office and we were happy to respond, but moving forward, let's be mindful of the fact that we need additional staff.

The last point I would say back to Mr. Ribeiro is that does... does NYCHA have, just to be clear, a legal obligation to provide heat and hot water 24/7 to its residents?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We have an obligation to provide heat and hot water to our residents, yes.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Okay. And that's basically... you know, that's a legal obligation; am I right?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We have a legal obligation to provide certain temperatures within each of the units, as well as certain water temperatures as well, yes.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right. So that obligation was broken a number of times each time these boilers broke down at the affected developments. I would like...

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: If I could just...
[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yes, please.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Alright, so the short answer is yes; one of the things that we do, when we do have outages, is we do monitor the apartment temperatures to have an idea of the impact that that is having on our residents.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Sir, I monitored the temperatures; I was freezing cold.

1
2 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I... I understand that...
3 [crosstalk]

4 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: It was awful and I
5 do believe that there's a new chairwoman now, Shola...
6 Shola Olatoye, and I would like for you to go back,
7 and we'll meet with her as well, that if obligations
8 were broken to the residents that were impacted by
9 these temporary boilers that keep breaking down, that
10 NYCHA should be considering right now a refund to
11 those residents who had no adequate heat and hot
12 water during these times of breaking down. [cheers,
13 applause] That is what happens with other landlords,
14 when there's no services being provided, people can
15 go on a rent strike and it's settled through, you
16 know, an arbitrator, whether or not... what that amount
17 is. But I do believe that NYCHA now has really an
18 obligation to now serious consider giving these
19 impacted residents some sort of a refund
20 proportionate to the days that they lost heat and hot
21 water and that includes not just here in Coney
22 Island, but across the City of New York, in Red Hook,
23 in the Rockaways, Lower Manhattan; that is... that's
24 really an important point, because they were not
25 given those legally obligated services, and if

1
2 Ritchie and I need to have follow-up conversations
3 with the chairwoman, we will, but that's a really
4 important point we wanna make here today.

5 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So I think, as was
6 indicated earlier, NYCHA did provide rent abatements
7 after Sandy as a result, for the scenarios that you
8 describe; however, I will take back your
9 recommendation with regards to subsequent outages and
10 rent abatements associated with that.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: I have some
12 final quick questions and I'll start with saying
13 thank you again to Brian Honan, who was on the ground
14 with me last year, right after Sandy and what we saw
15 were basements that flooded; they removed the water;
16 next day the water came back. How confident are you
17 that putting any boilers back into, specifically Red
18 Hook, I only have information for Red Hook, that
19 we're gonna be able to even have a resiliency plan
20 for boilers period; how confident are you in that?

21 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I would say, you know,
22 that's the whole point; we do not wanna put our
23 boilers back into the basements and have to rely on
24 mechanical flood gates or other sealants to try and
25

seal up wherever the water is coming from.

[interpose]

COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: See, that's what... that really shouldn't even be on the table yet, or at all.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We would like to say that yeah, it's... it... we do not intend on going that direction. [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: We like... we like to hear that, so that we can move into a different option like we've talking about. Next question; are you takin' any crime statistics about... that are... crime statistics in housing that have temporary boilers due to... and we've all seen 'em, right, they obstruct our current views, light; are you taking crime data around these boilers?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I don't believe that we have any crime data specific for the locations, you know relative to the mobile boilers; I think... I mean we will certainly discuss with the Police Department, but I do not believe we get our crime data on a development basis... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Okay.

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2 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: and therefore that may
3 be difficult to do, but we certainly will have a
4 conversation with the Police Department... [interpose]

5 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: And that's a
6 thing we definitely are gonna follow up on.

7 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Okay.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: And the last
9 thing is; we haven't necessarily heard about the
10 burning, scalding reports of these boilers that
11 create hot, hot water for folks, and so are you
12 taking that data and do you have that?

13 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We can provide you with
14 data that we have regarding water temperatures
15 [interpose, crosstalk]

16 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: I think we're
17 gonna hear some of that from the panels that we're
18 gonna have. Thank you so much Chairs.

19 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Just to be clear, I
20 appreciate that you'll bring in our requests with
21 regards to either a rent reduction or rebate to the
22 impacted residents with these boiler outages; we
23 would like that feedback from the chairwoman in
24 writing, just so we're clear with this committee.

25 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Understood.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I appreciate that.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Before we go onto the next panel, I just wanna just note one thing that troubles me, 'cause you know the tenants said that they felt... the tenants who testified earlier said that they felt they were kept in the dark and you've testified that you feel that you've kept them fully informed and so there's a disconnect, there seems to be a colossal failure of communication between the Housing Authority and the tenant and so we wanna see improvements going forward. So are you committed... who's in charge of outreaching to tenants and keeping them updated about the progress of the heating systems?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So actually, I'm glad you brought that up; that is one of the recent improvements that we believe we've made with regards to that. We have a new group within NYCHA; they're job is entirely resident engagement; Margarita Lopez is the Executive Vice President for that area and is ultimately responsible and we believe that that will allow us to do the technical aspects of our job and then her group can assist us and support us in the

communications effort; we've been trying to improve that communication.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So again, there's a disconnect, right, there's contradiction between what the Housing Authority's telling us; rather than litigate that, I will say this; I will say that the Committee's going to ask Miss Lopez, the Housing Authority to deliver periodic progress reports in every housing development that has a mobile boiler and we would like the Housing Authority to submit dates of these public presentations so that we can hold you accountable, because... [interpose]

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: That...

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: because we wanna ensure that there's smooth communication between the Housing Authority and the tenants.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We would be happy to share the data and if in any way there's a way to improve that communication, we would be happy to do that. [interpose]

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Sir, can you clarify? What is... what is Margarita's Title?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Margarita Lopez is the Executive Vice President for Community Operations.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Executive Vice President of Community Operations. And where is she today?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I don't know.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: See, this goes to the heart of our matter, that there is a disconnect between what's happening at NYCHA and folks here on the ground and if she's in charge of community operations, then community operations has been a failure; [background comment] that's just the bottom line; there... there... [applause] it's a failure there. [background comment] I would really like to have a follow-up discussion with, you know, the head of Community Operations, because clearly there is a disconnect here, sir and I'm glad that you recognize that, you're taking some steps now to address it, but it's after the fact. We really have to make adjustments now so this never happens again. It's really, really important we get this right; it's crucial. This is life and death, sir; I understand... we're not here to single you out here or... we're not doing that right now, but the point is, this is life and death for people. These are people that you know, you go home and thank goodness you have heat

1
2 and hot water; this is life and death for folks,
3 these are people on medication, they need this, this
4 is not... we... this is... these are human beings. So it's
5 important that whoever's in charge of Community
6 Operations comes down to the community and listens to
7 this directly. [applause, cheers]

8 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: We thank you for
9 your testimony and again, we wanna play a role in
10 improving communication...

11 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: but thank you; I
13 appreciate your testimony. We wanna call up the... and
14 again, we're limited... in about an hour this center is
15 gonna be converted into a daycare center, I believe.
16 Well after-school program, so we... we may not be able
17 to give everyone a chance to speak, but please submit
18 your testimony... you have the opportunity to submit
19 your testimony in writing and we will ask... if we have
20 additional questions to ask of the Housing Authority,
21 we will submit them in writing. Yes. We're gonna
22 ask that some representative from the Housing
23 Authority stay to... okay. Okay. Okay. [background
24 comments] So I'm calling Sheryl Braxton... [background
25 comment] everyone will stay to hear the residents; I

1 appreciate that, it's much appreciated. Nadine
2 Debray... Dabney [background comment]. She left?
3 Okay. [background comment] Okay [background
4 comments] Terse... Okay. No. Anyone else? Arisa...
5 Risa Bent [phonetic]. Okay. Please come to the
6 panel. [background comments] Okay. I've got a few...
7 yeah... Josephine, Josephina, Ogando, Jonathan
8 Gardenhire. 'Kay. Nathalie, from ALIGN, from the...
9 okay. And who else? Okay.

11 So for the sake of time, we will ask each
12 panelist to limit your remarks to two minutes. So
13 let's start with... [background comment] whoever wishes
14 to... [background comment] [interpose]

15 ED COSBY: Good afternoon, my name is Ed
16 Crosby... [interpose]

17 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Hold on for one
18 second. Can you please raise your right hand? Do
19 you swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole
20 truth and nothing but the truth in your testimony
21 before this committee... [interpose]

22 ED COSBY: I...

23 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: and to respond
24 honestly to council members' questions?

25 ED COSBY: I do.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you.

ED COSBY: Good afternoon; my name is Ed Cosby and going back to Hurricane Sandy, as I know we... I own two businesses in two buildings here in Coney Island; I'm a former resident of NYCHA, I lived in Gravesend Houses for a number of years. We championed a rally back in January, two months after Hurricane Sandy, to get Congress to act on the Hurricane Relief bill; we travelled to Washington D.C., we sat in the gallery and we got Congress to vote on the relief of the \$50.1 billion that was allocated to the tri-state area. Of that \$50 billion, \$1.7 billion was allocated to the State; \$1.77 billion was allocated to the City of New York. In doing some research, I read that HUD has allocated \$3.9 billion, as of last May of 2013. In addition to the \$3.9 billion, HUD has allocated \$42 million to HUD also specifically for security cameras to be installed in many of the NYCHA houses. As of this point not a dollar of that money has been released to provide security cameras to many of the housing projects here in Coney Island. As you know and aware that many of the housing projects in our area and the residents have suffered from the fate of Hurricane

1
2 Sandy, many people -- seniors, residents -- have
3 suffered from the mold [bell] and the continuation of
4 these deplorable conditions that exist here today.
5 Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And please take
7 note, there is a timer over there, just to keep track
8 of time. [applause] Okay, thank you.

9 SHERYL BRAXTON: Good afternoon; I'm
10 Sheryl Braxton... [background comment] Oh, okay.
11 Okay. [background comment] Alright. [background
12 comment] Okay. Good afternoon; I'm Sheryl Braxton;
13 I'm a resident of Red Hook for 40 years; also I'm
14 kinda little nervous and shaky, 'cause I really
15 haven't been to one of these big executive hearings,
16 but I'm glad to see you, because I'm hurtin', you
17 know, I'm really hurtin'; I fought with Sandy, you
18 know, and we keep comin' to these meetings over and
19 over and over again; we have kids, okay; it should be
20 no different the way we live; we shouldn't have to
21 come to these kinda meetings, they should know
22 already. I'll show you the paper where we've
23 actually had meetings already, okay, after Sandy and
24 they still say, uh, they're gonna promise us things;
25 we get nothing. Okay, I'm gonna tell you why the

1
2 temporary boilers are not real good. Okay, I have a
3 video I'm gonna show you of somebody's apartment;
4 when it gets real hot it cracks the wall and you know
5 what that causes; fumes, okay. Then if your kid
6 touch the radiator they can get burned, okay?
7 Alright? Then another thing; they cause fires.
8 Okay, we had two fires in Red Hook. I'm also a
9 community activist, okay; I have my own meetings in
10 Red Hook, okay, with the community; I also work [off
11 mic], okay, and more, okay; we rallied at 250 to get
12 the lights on, to get the lights on; we were the
13 first ones to optimize [off mic]. So it's just crazy
14 to me that why should we have to explain somethin'
15 that they already know. You know, they know that
16 these things are unsafe, they know what we need.
17 Okay, what we want is somebody who can come up.
18 Okay, I'm not mad, but just compromise a little; try
19 to make some kinda change, if not for me, for my
20 grandchild; I just had a new grandchild Monday, okay;
21 I rally with Carlo [phonetic], I work with people, I
22 volunteer; we hear the same thing over and over. So
23 another thing; the water, oh Jesus... sometimes I'm
24 scared, it's like the water's brown, okay; they got
25 some kinda funny little suds; when you turn the water

1
2 on sometimes it's hot, so there's no control level
3 for this heat, all of this, there's no control
4 levels, no pressure levels for the water. I... I
5 watched a man put chemicals in the water. What's all
6 those chemicals; I have to know; I mean do we have to
7 live like this? I have a picture to show you the
8 garbage, okay, that I sometimes just take upon
9 myself, Sheryl, don't worry 'bout it, and I'll go and
10 clean it up. So now, with [off mic]... [interpose]

11 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So actually... Sheryl,
12 the time is up, but I will say this... [crosstalk]

13 SHERYL BRAXTON: Okay. Okay.

14 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I will say that
15 Public Housing Committee, we appreciate your
16 testimony and Council Member Menchaca and the Public
17 Housing Committee will follow up with the Housing
18 Authority on the fires, the cracked walls and
19 whether... [interpose]

20 SHERYL BRAXTON: I appreciate it. I
21 appreciate it... [interpose]

22 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Yeah. And...

23 SHERYL BRAXTON: I really do. Thank you
24 very much for your time... [crosstalk]

25

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: and we will get... please remind me... just note that, so we can get back Sheryl with a response and we'll reach out to the Housing Authority on your behalf.

NATHALIE ALEGRE: Good afternoon; my name is Nathalie Alegre; I'm an Organizer with ALIGN/The Alliance for a Greater New York, but also ALIGN [off mic] with Sandy survivors from all the five boroughs [off mic] across the City, including public housing residents who were [off mic] Sheryl is part of and also community boards[off mic]. We [off mic] advocating for a number of things regarding NYCHA, primarily requesting a clear repair [off mic] timeline that is transparent from them. Also, [off mic] timelines for public housing residents, since we have [off mic] the city and state and [off mic] communication in general and transparency in general.

On the issue of the emergency generators, we think they should be repaired immediately, but also they must be [off mic] in a way that is [off mic] equitable. We strongly support NYCHA's plan to implement [off mic] at NYCHA's buildings and we think it's an important first step, but we also think that it's time for NYCHA to be bold, [off mic] and

1
2 creative about how they go about fixing these
3 systems. [off mic] for example, should okay private
4 plans, we are very... we believe strongly that all [off
5 mic] residents form NYCHA's housing and that these
6 can save energy and that energy savings should be
7 reinvested in NYCHA buildings so that the money that
8 is, you know, from the savings can actually go to
9 repairs that people have and the mold [off mic] that
10 were exacerbated by Sandy.

11 Those are things that in all these
12 improvements again NYCHA residents should be hired to
13 do the work so that we get some more bang for our
14 buck when it comes to investment.

15 There's a couple of points and we
16 acknowledge that NYCHA has [off mic], but there is
17 greater basic scoring card of power purchase
18 agreements, which are another financial [bell] tool,
19 and also making sure that the money's matched, so you
20 know there's federal money coming; there must be a
21 way to be creative and [off mic]. Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Nathalie, thank you
23 for your testimony and I should note; Nathalie's an
24 organizer for ALIGN, which I consider to be probably
25

1
2 the best advocate for Sandy survivors in the City, so
3 we appreciate the work you do. Next.

4 ALISSA PACARRO: Hello; my name is Alissa
5 Pacarro [phonetic]; I have lived in Red Hook Houses
6 for 23 years and raised my two daughters there. I
7 have worked as a community organizer [off mic] for
8 the last seven years. After Hurricane Sandy I had no
9 running water, heat and electricity for three weeks.
10 During that time I worked over 10 hours per day [off
11 mic] to ensure that my neighbors had food supplies,
12 information, medical attention and emotional support.

13 Today, 16 months after the storm, we
14 still have six temporary boilers at the Red Hook
15 Houses that are providing heat and hot water to
16 multiple buildings; these boilers are loud and
17 blocking walkways. Despite being active in the
18 community, those of us here today have no sense of
19 when the temporary boilers will be replaced with
20 permanent reliable system.

21 In late 2013 our entire community [off
22 mic] conducted a survey of 500 NYCHA residents [off
23 mic] Coney Island and Lower East Side; in each of our
24 NYCHA communities, residents expressed frustration
25 with wait times for repairs, persistent mold,

temporary boilers [off mic] around the houses and lack of information [off mic] temporary boilers and other [off mic] plans [off mic].

And we have recommendations for the Committee. Like one; demand that NYCHA publish a plan that details when and how they will complete the installation of more permanent [off mic] system. Two; insist that the new boiler system and critical wiring component in some [off mic] developments, like Red Hook, be raised above current flood levels and that NYCHA prioritize this work and then dedicate resources or advocate for ne... necessary funding to complete this [bell] vital improvements. Three; recommend that NYCHA improve the tenant communication system; residents will start to know what to expect in regards to temporary boilers, house repairs and mold removal plan. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I appreciate your testimony. Thank you. [applause] And I thank you for your testimony and Sheryl, I want you to know, yes; it should not take an official City Council hearing to get action from NYCHA, but I want you to know that everyone in this table has your back and has the back of every public housing resident.

[cheers, applause] With that said, I wanna call up the next panel. Judith, from the Legal Aid Society... [interpose]

SHERYL BRAXTON: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you. Ben Axelrod... [background comments] Okay. Deborah Franklin-Reed. Okay. Miss Lou [phonetic]. [background comment] Edwin. [background comments] Miss Mulls [phonetic]. [background comments] Martin Levine. Thank you for coming. Please raise your right hand. Do you swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth in your testimony before this committee and to respond honestly to council members' questions?

[collective agreement]

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you for coming. We'll start with Judith from the Legal Aid Society.

JUDITH GOLDINER: Hello, my name is Judith Goldiner and I am the Attorney-in-Charge of the Civil Law Reform Unit at the Legal Aid Society. Can you hear me now?

So we are obviously optimistic that this new administration is gonna provide more resources to

1
2 the Housing Authority, and to that end, you know it
3 was great news that after seven years of pushing, the
4 new administration has eliminated the payments to the
5 Police Department, which will give the Housing
6 Authority more funding for needed repairs.

7 Unfortunately, what we... you know what we knew before
8 and we learned in even more detail today is that that
9 is not gonna make up and make it possible for them to
10 replace the boilers that they are currently using
11 temporarily.

12 You know we agree with them that it would
13 be much better if they could move the boilers to
14 safer places and above ground so that they won't be
15 destroyed if and when we have another flood, and to
16 that end, much more of the federal funds really needs
17 to be allocated to the Housing Authority.

18 I know this committee is likely to have
19 other hearings; we have other concerns about how
20 funding was allocated by the prior administration
21 from the federal government; we very strongly believe
22 that it was not allocated to the people who most need
23 it; think that's especially true of public housing;
24 it's also true of other low-income renters. So you
25 know I would... I would hope that we could work

1
2 together in trying to get more funding from the CDBG
3 funds to make sure that this boiler replacement can
4 actually happen, 'cause what we've seen is what's in
5 place right now is not working.

6 I would also like to... one more
7 recommendation -- I don't have a lot of time -- is
8 that the Housing Authority really needs to give rent
9 abatements when essential services are not in place
10 for people. We had... you know, [bell] we had a huge
11 fight with them during, you know, right after Sandy
12 about this issue and it was only because of a huge
13 amount of both public pressure, we threatened legal
14 action; there was lots of media attention, but they
15 finally gave abatements to people after the storm,
16 but that needs to happen on a more regular basis,
17 because it is not right for people to have to go to
18 court to get an abatement when they didn't have
19 essential services. Thank you so much and I really
20 look forward to working with the committee members; I
21 know there's so many Sandy issues we need to work
22 out, so thank you very much.

23 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you and we'll
24 be glad to work together to get the folks here rent
25 abatements who were just impacted by the outages

these temporary boilers, so thank you. Thank you, Judith.

MARTIN LEVINE: My name's Martin Levine; I'm an area resident; I'm also an Adjunct Professor with the City University of New York Building Performance Lab and we've been working with Councilman Treyger and all the other elected officials and we designed a microgrid based on renewable energy which is resilient to a storm surge and will operate under torrent conditions. We've been working in cooperation with the Mayor's Office of Long Term Planning and Sustainability, Con Edison, U.S. Department of Energy, as well as several agencies in New York State and we've developed a prototype, a pilot project; the information [off mic] packages. It was submitted OMB and it is eligible for funding under the CDBG-DR block grants. And two projects were made a priority under New York Rising Community Reconstruction Program; one for [off mic]; one for NYCHA. And originally we didn't look at the NYCHA buildings for it because Mayor Bloomberg had a plan for [off mic], which aren't gonna work. So I also gave a copy of the plan to NYCHA today [off

mic]. I just wanna thank Councilman Treyger, you know, for working along with us [off mic].

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you for your testimony. We agree, you have a first-rate council member, so.

SHEILA SMALLS: Thank you; I might need more than two minutes [off mic]. My name is Sheila Smalls [phonetic] and I reside in O'Dwyer Gardens, once a beautiful development citywide. Yes, we welcomed the boilers when they came in in the beginning, because we needed heat, but after a while the fumes started to annoy my daughter; we had to keep our windows closed for the entire summer; the noise from the trucks coming to deliver the oil was like unbearable and the boiler itself is just really in the way of the basketball courts and the children in my area that don't have a playground and didn't have a playground for the past 12 years, now the only thing that they have is the basketball court; is closed up because they have the boiler right there, okay, so they closed up that basketball court, which is... I mean you've just taken away everything that they had.

1
2 I would like to, you know, challenge this
3 gentleman that said that we don't complain and that's
4 not true; I am NYCHA's biggest complainer and you
5 could call them and they can tell you, we know Miss
6 Smalls, okay. I've complained about the fumes, I've
7 complained about the noise of the boilers; numerous
8 times the Fire Department has come to my house
9 because of this. I feel that they mismanage a lot of
10 money. Being a former TA, I know the ins and outs of
11 NYCHA, and their practice is to not work with the
12 best, but hire the cheapest, whether the work gets
13 done or not. So a lot'a times the money is given to
14 people who are not gonna complete the job and once
15 the job is not completed they have to turn around and
16 hire someone else to get the job done; that's a
17 misappropriation of funding. They've been doing this
18 for years and every time that I speak about it,
19 people wanna shut me down. But I'm telling you as
20 facts, they need to start from the top to the bottom,
21 restructure how they do things and just get people
22 there that have common sense. Common sense is a
23 person is... [bell] okay, this is one common sense I'm
24 gonna give you -- Why would you pay thousands of
25 dollars and millions of dollars for a boiler that's

temporary when you could take that money and put into something that is permanent? Why would you then also put up scaffolds everywhere; it make... it looks... our place looks like a prison and it brings people down and we've been like this for four years with no hope of when they're gonna get rid of these scaffolds. Why are they everywhere; why? Why do we have to live like prisoners in our own homes? Okay. And my thing is this; if they're misappropriating the funding, someone needs to, and I thank you Mark for being the one that's gonna step up and say let me see your paperwork and let me see what you're doing, because for a long time they've been getting away with this and enough is enough; we have to like stop this. And one more thing about the tickets -- This is how they get through the tickets; when I call in to say I have a complaint -- okay, let's say my window's broke; they'll send a person right away, the person will come the exact next day, but they won't have the materials to fix my window. I have an immaculate apartment; [applause] this is how they open and close our tickets very fast. They'll send a person to your home, but the work still won't get done. [background comment] [applause]

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you Miss Smalls for your testimony.

DEBORAH FRANKLIN-REED: Good afternoon. I'd like to thank Councilman Treyger and Councilman Torres for this historic event in Coney Island; it is [off mic] it is so needing. My name is Deborah Franklin-Reed, Resident Leader for Coney Island Houses. We are five-building, 14-story complex that rests closer to the ocean than most high-rises.

On November 18th, 2012 NYCHA issued a statement that power, heat and hot water has been restored to 100 percent of its buildings affected by Hurricane Sandy. The statement also included that while these services had been restored, some residents will occasionally experience service disruptions as generators are disconnected and buildings are reconnected to utility power and as a result of ongoing maintenance of the temporary boilers. Residents were told that if they experience any service disruptions, residents should contact NYCHA's Customer Service Center at 718-707-7771.

I chose to attend this historic hearing today to tell you that public housing residents in all of the affected Hurricane Sandy areas can provide

1
2 you with the first names of each operator that works
3 for NYCHA's Customer Contact Center. As resident
4 leaders, we speak to the supervisors of the Contact
5 Center; I personally have cultivated a relationship
6 with each of them; I know the names of their first
7 children; this is how often I've spoken to them.
8 Surfside Gardens, Sites 4 and 5, located on West 28th
9 Street and Mermaid Avenue residents reported no heat
10 or hot water beginning on February the 15th through
11 February the 17th. Residents of 2940, 2950 and 2960
12 West 31st Street reported a water pipe bursting
13 [bell] on February 24th, which leads to not having
14 heat and hot water. This site is another site for
15 Surfside. The senior residents also reported not
16 having proper or adequate heat or hot water prior to
17 the disruption. Residents in Coney Island Houses who
18 live on higher floors reported warm to cool water and
19 cold pipes in their apartments. Senior residents in
20 the complex have stated how they sleep with extra
21 clothes and blankets just to stay warm, while most
22 report using their ovens to heat their space.

23 During the general meeting in December,
24 representatives of NYCHA's Capital Department were
25 invited to Coney Island Houses to answer questions

1
2 about the temporary boilers. Their answers to our
3 questions were; the problem with the temporary
4 boilers is they are temporary. Compared to the
5 boiler systems located in the basements of our
6 building... [clearing throat] excuse me... they were not
7 strong enough to provide an even distribution of heat
8 and hot water to all five buildings and to all 14
9 floors. It was explained that the old system
10 consisted of a two-boiler system; when one boiler
11 shut down to replenish itself, the other boiler would
12 kick in and there was continuity of service. When I
13 inquired as to how long it would take... it would be
14 before the permanent system is put in place, the
15 response from the representatives was two years. We
16 were told NYCHA is in the process of securing funding
17 to build an elevated platform that would house a two-
18 boiler system to adequately provide services to the
19 residents of public housing. Of course, we were told
20 to call the Customer Contact Center for any
21 disruptions in service.

22 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Miss Reed, just for
23 the sake of time, if you could just quickly wrap it
24 up. [interpose]
25

1
2 DEBORAH FRANKLIN-REED: Yes. Okay. It
3 was very nice of the New York City Housing Authority
4 when the boilers went down in Surfside to provide the
5 seniors with carbon monoxide detectors so that... to
6 keep them safe, but our concern is that these are our
7 seniors; god forbid anything could happen and they
8 could be dead in there, they could be found dead in
9 their apartments. What I would like to do is, I
10 would really like to thank the organizers of this
11 hearing to allow me to be heard and I trust that
12 together we can make life better for residents of
13 public housing. [applause]

14 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I appreciate your
15 testimony. I wanna... I wanna quickly note though,
16 even though we're directing quite a bit anger at the
17 Housing Authority, we should probably be directing as
18 much if not more anger at the federal government and
19 the state government, which has been catastrophically
20 disinvesting for public housing for more than a
21 decade. The federal government has left the Housing
22 Authority with [applause] billions and billions of
23 dollars in capital shortfalls and the state
24 government is not even contributing a dollar. So I
25 would encourage all of you to call your state

1
2 legislators and ask, why are public housing residents
3 invisible to Albany. With that said, I thank you for
4 your testimony. [applause] I would like to call
5 Miss Bloomfield... [background comment] Okay. Joelle
6 Kaufman, I believe [background comment], Sophia... last
7 name Santana; I can't quite read the first name. Oh
8 and we have the president of the Citywide Council of
9 Presidents here, Reginald. [background comments]
10 Wanda; would you like to join the panel or?
11 [background comment] You're invited, don't worry
12 about it, I'm the Chair; I can make an exception.
13 Robert... [background comments] and the last name is
14 Deborah. So we're actually gonna have more than... if
15 we could pull up a chair, we'll have a panel of five,
16 just for the sake of efficiency.

17 Okay, everyone please raise your right
18 hand. Do you swear or affirm to tell the truth, the
19 whole truth and nothing but the truth in your
20 testimony before this committee and to respond
21 honestly to council members' questions?

22 [collective affirmation]

23 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I appreciate that.
24 Whoever wishes to go first, we'll... [background
25 comments]

1
2 ROBERT SWAGGER: Well, I wasn't plannin'
3 on stayin' here, but after so many things I heard, I
4 had some concerns and questions. Oh, Robert Swagger,
5 sorry.

6 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Can... can you speak
7 into the mic, sir?

8 ROBERT SWAGGER: Is this better?

9 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Yes.

10 ROBERT SWAGGER: 'Kay. Like I said, I
11 wasn't plannin' on staying, but after listenin' to
12 some of the things I heard, I thought I might wanna
13 stay; I had some concerns and questions. And one of
14 them was with the temporary boiler. [background
15 comments] The cost of the temporary boiler versus
16 the permanent -- I've had some personal experience
17 with this and generally speaking, inside of a year
18 you can almost pay for a new boiler; I can't
19 understand why NYCHA would make a decision to go with
20 a temporary boiler for such a long period of time, in
21 three or four years you could've bought two or three
22 boilers at that price, [off mic] a storm, it's just...
23 it's a smarter choice. Also the air quality issues;
24 I don't understand how it's possible for there to be
25 no air quality issues from the stacks. Several of

1
2 the permit requirements were excluded, the
3 requirements of Department Air Resources and the
4 Department of Environmental Conservation and I'd like
5 to understand the process that was utilized for how
6 those stacks were installed. Generally they have to
7 a certain distance away from the building, they have
8 to be certain elevation; none of that was really
9 discussed here. You know, short-handed... I have some
10 other stuff, it's just not as well organized [off
11 mic]. Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: We appreciate your
13 testimony. Sir, would you like to...

14 JOEL KUPFERMAN: Joel Kupferman, New York
15 Environmental and I really wanna follow up on NYCHA's
16 statements and actually say that I'm really outraged
17 by some of the statements that NYCHA has given and
18 it's primarily over the fact they discounted that
19 there's any major public health risk; this was the
20 perfect storm for health risks. New York State leads
21 in diesel-related deaths in the country -- American
22 Lung Association, February 2005. Nationally diesel
23 exhaust poses a cancer risk that is 7.5 times higher
24 than the combined total cancer risk in all other air
25 toxins. What we heard today is they just said that

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2 the complaints were elevated or exaggerated. That is
3 wrong, illegal and immoral for them to basically
4 discount people's health by just saying that their
5 complaints were exaggerated.

6 And also, he pointed out all the
7 regulations were not only pushed aside, but part of
8 the perfect storm was that these diesel generators
9 were placed on the ground, had to go up, you had all
10 those windows; they could've done a lot better; they
11 could've just added chimneys or exhausts, but didn't...
12 they just didn't do it. And also, the emergency that
13 happened is that shortly after Hurricane Sandy hit,
14 the Health and Human Services secretary declared that
15 it was a public health emergency, emphasis on public
16 health again and that's been discounted. And by just
17 saying they're exaggerated, their complaints, they're
18 blaming the victims; seems like [off mic] are coming
19 back.

20 The Law Project has been very active in
21 this area; we've been fighting, especially, we've at
22 least told [off mic] City Council 12 years ago;
23 whatever, when 9/11 happened and when the idea... I
24 remember now [off mic] and the Mayor said the air was
25 safe, okay; I heard that today from NYCHA and I think

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2 that's when we really have to go back to -- the air
3 wasn't safe [off mic], okay. I also wanna say that
4 besides being familiar with these cases, we are
5 involved with litigation against NYCHA. NYCHA wanted
6 to place [off mic] luxury houses in the middle of
7 these developments that would take away light and
8 air, [bell] but also... can I continue or?

9 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Just wrap it up very
10 quickly.

11 JOEL KUPFERMAN: Thank you. So we also...
12 what wasn't brought up is that NYCHA also tried the
13 stipulation with the Upper Manhattan's [off mic]
14 Committee, basically admitting that mold and water
15 moisture is a problem in NYCHA housing and they
16 agreed to clean up every spot that there's water or
17 standing water; there's a violation of the ADA,
18 American Disabilities Act. So NYCHA hasn't been
19 forthcoming telling you of what they... they admitted
20 to in federal court. Mold has been a problem; not
21 only that, we've been told that these generators
22 weren't working because the area was flooded; we have
23 to ask; who was in the flooded area? Over half the
24 City's sewage plants were not working at the time; we
25 had problems with e coli and other problems, yet that

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2 was just totally discounted. I work in Haiti and it
3 turned out that people... the cholera outbreak came out
4 in Haiti just from some e coli from a [off mic] ...
5 [interpose]

6 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Sir, we appreciate
7 the impassioned testimony and... [interpose]

8 JOEL KUPFERMAN: Let me just give few
9 recommendations.

10 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I cannot, actually,
11 'cause we're about to end in 10 minutes and I wanna
12 give everyone a chance to respond, but I wanna assure
13 you that many of the issues you brought up we will be
14 looking at over the course of the year, so. And you
15 can submit your testimony in writing; that's always...

16 WANDA FELICIANO: Hello. Wanda Feliciano
17 from Unity Tower. Hi Mark. I'm gonna piggyback off
18 of them; that's what I was gonna talk about, but plus
19 I wanted to hit first where you were sayin' about
20 givin' the tenants, the residents a refund. I think
21 Unity Tower will be getting a whole lot of money.
22 My... I have my residents here; our heat goes off 5:30
23 or quarter to 5 every Friday and comes back on at
24 3:30 or so in the mornin' on Monday. This is
25 documented, I call; like the other lady said before,

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2 Miss Small... I mean Miss Reed, I know their names by
3 heart and they come out and then they say, okay
4 Wanda, it's coming back on; it never comes back on
5 until Monday; these are documented. I spoke to you
6 about it before, I have spoken to Housing; I spoke to
7 everyone about it; it's a shame that we've gotta
8 freeze all winter, you know, all weekend.

9 The next one is, as far as sayin'
10 somethin' about the smell; on my D, E, F and G and H
11 line, that's where the boiler is; if you go into my
12 home, which I will invite you, you could sit in my
13 livin' room and smell it; me as a... I'm a lady who... I
14 am ill, I just got on medication; the smell alone is
15 unbearable; it smells like gas and fumes and... and if
16 you look at the side of my building on that side, the
17 building is turning colors, literally. It used to be
18 a [off mic] little pink, because they used to call us
19 the pink little building, and now it's really like a
20 rusty... your window; I could wipe my window that's
21 [off mic]; would it be proper if I wiped my window
22 and give them the cloth and they could have it
23 analyzed to see that the smoke is comin' up to the
24 sixth floor and past. Me and Rosalyn Clark went
25 around yesterday, a lot of my tenants up higher, 8,

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2 9, 10, were saying that they can't breathe; they went
3 and purchased humidifiers because the smell is so
4 bad. And they continue tellin' me that there's
5 nothing wrong, that the boilers are okay, that
6 there's no shutoff switch, but then when they come
7 they click somein' and the heat goes off for 10
8 minutes and then it goes back on. So what are they
9 doing? Now, I'm not tryin' to point fingers here,
10 but my boiler works, my inside boiler, the real
11 boiler worked for months after Sandy and then one day
12 a truck came and shut it down; I asked why; they told
13 me because it was not checked proper so they're bein'
14 penalized. And I was like, what? So my boiler
15 worked, I do believe they shut it down [bell] because
16 of insurance; that's just what I'm sayin'.
17 [clapping] That's what I'm sayin'.

18 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Miss Feliciano,
19 thank you for your testimony. Reginald; you wish to...
20 okay, ladies first.

21 DEBORAH CARTER: Good afternoon; I'm
22 Deborah Carter, the Resident Leader for Gravesend
23 Houses and I wanted to just simply talk to NYCHA
24 about the... when I came here you were talking about
25 Sandy funds and things like that I understand that

1 they had gotten \$3 million and more and some of the
2 residents... the majority of us in the Coney Island
3 area, TA presidents, had not gotten anything from
4 Sandy because when we went to the government, they
5 were telling us we have to go to NYCHA and we had to
6 get whatever funds that we got from... to get from
7 NYCHA and the majority of us were denied and with my
8 office, I still have not gotten on my feet from Sandy
9 and it's going on two years now and I wanna ask
10 NYCHA; where is the furniture, the computers, all the
11 stuff that we are lost as TA presidents; we work very
12 hard in Coney Island here and for FEMA to tell us
13 that we're not going to get any funds... they denied
14 us, some of us [off mic] for the... the... the loan, we
15 were denied, we filled out even with FEMA; we were
16 also denied, and we're still sitting, we haven't
17 gotten any results or anything. And I also wanna
18 talk about the crawl spaces, the smell, the feces
19 that we have to live in. I have 15 buildings and
20 seven floors and that thing comes from... the smell
21 comes from the crawl spaces all the way up to the
22 seventh floor. We can no longer live like this,
23 we're human beings, we're askin' NYCHA to take the
24 Band-aids off and do the healing of where we live at
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2 and work with us and stop forgetting about the
3 leaders; we are leaders [bell] in these developments
4 and they need to come together with us and talk with
5 us about the issues that are going on in our
6 developments; we live there and half of them don't
7 even know us and half of them don't even wanna be
8 bothered with us, because we know what's going on in
9 our developments. [applause]

10 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: We will make sure
11 that NYCHA gets to know you, trust me. [interpose]

12 REGINALD BOWMAN: Good af...

13 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Reginald.

14 REGINALD BOWMAN: Good afternoon
15 everyone. My name is Reginald Bowman and I'm the
16 President of the Citywide Council of Presidents of
17 the New York City Housing Authority's Residents'
18 Associations; I represent more than 600,000 residents
19 that live in public housing in the City of New York
20 and I would like to commend Council Member Torres and
21 Treyger for putting together something that oughta be
22 done more often, which is the Housing Authority and
23 all public agencies should always hold public
24 hearings in the areas for the residents and the
25

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2 people that they serve [off mic]. So I publicly
3 commend you that and welcome you to where we live.

4 One of the things that... well there's
5 three things I wanna point out, because I've been a
6 resident of public housing now for 30 years and this
7 is my 30th year as a resident association leader and
8 I come from the old school; I've seen four, five
9 generations of elected official leaders and I've lost
10 count of the number of people that I've seen that
11 have come in and out of the New York City Housing
12 Authority to be responsible for the conditions and of
13 the managing of our buildings. What I'm primarily
14 concerned about is something that was brought up.
15 Number one, the Mayor and the Governor need to be
16 brought to the table; they need to, for the first
17 time in decades, take responsibility for the funding
18 of the public housing that they have abandoned and
19 not funded for more than 20 years, and in this
20 session of Albany they need to put a line item,
21 public housing, back into the budget so that we can
22 start to manage our facilities the way that they
23 should be. Number two, this is the second Superstorm
24 that we have felt as residents and as New Yorkers
25 [bell] and to close -- 'cause I'm not gonna be long

1 and I will send you guys a written statement -- this
2 is our second Superstorm; the problem... everybody has
3 come here to talk, the advocacy groups, NYCHA, the
4 public officials and the residents; this is not the
5 first time that this has happened, as somebody
6 already pointed out, there's a bunch of litigation
7 going on and everything else. My solution this is
8 very simple, and I hope that you take this suggestion
9 and I look forward to making sure that you work to
10 make this happen. We need to get appropriate
11 funding, because all the funds that have been put
12 into this project are not finding their way to find a
13 solution. Number two, we need experienced, result-
14 oriented management in NYCHA. You cannot keep the
15 same people in the same places and expect different
16 results; it's not gonna happen. So we're expecting
17 to come out of this hearing, and other things, we
18 want to see the funds come from the state and city,
19 we want the funds that have been allocated to be
20 appropriated so that they get to the residents where
21 they belong, we wanna stop these temporary solutions
22 to long problems and we want to see appropriate
23 managers in place that are going to put the
24 situations and fix the problems that exist in our
25

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2 development. This is 30 years now that we've watched
3 this happen over and over again and I know this is
4 just about makin' resiliency and I really understand
5 how the structure works, but the residents who have
6 lived under these conditions each and every year,
7 this is our second winter, we cannot afford to keep
8 going through these winters like this and we can't
9 afford to keep sitting back and listening to people
10 propose solutions and then when we go home... we're
11 gonna go to the bus, we're gonna go home, right
12 across the street or in the surrounding area; when we
13 go home, we have to tell our people, well, they told
14 us that they're gonna fix it again and we're waiting
15 for another administration. This year we wanna see
16 results Councilman Treyger and Mr. Torres and company
17 and NYCHA, we wanna see results, because otherwise
18 what we're going to do... we have 270,000 registered
19 voters in public housing and if we can't get the
20 results done, we'll start electing leadership that
21 will. Thank you. [applause]

22 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Now I'm grateful to
23 all of you for your testimony, thank you so much.
24 We're gonna call up one last panel. Evangeline, so
25 it's a panel of one, I believe.

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2 EVANGELINE HUGH: Okay. Hello, my name
3 is Evangeline Hugh [phonetic] and thank you for
4 coming out. I was gonna read the statement, a
5 bulletin that was put together from some friends of
6 mine from Women's Press Collective, talking about the
7 funding and money that came out that never got to us;
8 I'll pass it and then you can look at it, you know in
9 your... at your leisure time.

10 I have a personal story that I have to
11 get to, because usually I'm doing things this for the
12 community; I've been working in the community for a
13 long time and even during the storm, me and my
14 children both were out givin' out food and you know,
15 taking care of our neighbors and helpin' ourselves
16 also. I am a... a little nervous... I am a New York City
17 Housing Authority resident for the past 15 years;
18 I've been under pressure to allow the police to
19 invade my illusion of privacy when they took an
20 invasive examination of my dwelling; they say they
21 were lookin' for my son, not for crime, but because I
22 signed a statement saying that I would not let him
23 into the apartment. When I signed the statement I
24 was given no choice, I have seven children and
25 nowhere else to go. Since then, every year around

1 holiday time I can't see my son or grandchildren in
2 my home; the police show up at any time demanding to
3 come in, with no respect or decency; I'm told if he
4 comes into the building we will be kicked out into
5 the cold. Meanwhile, drug users and other people who
6 run the building that we lived in, this is the
7 beginning of [off mic]; we need repairs to be done
8 and I'm told that they won't be done until the end of
9 next year. I pay rent and my apartment is falling
10 apart because of substandard quality materials. We
11 don't even have a doorknob, there's peeling paint,
12 there's broken windows and the kitchen sink is
13 falling down. I work with the Women's Press
14 Collective and Community Voices Heard and still I
15 can't get help for myself because I have no money; I
16 do volunteer work. And... oh and I work with Coney
17 Island Coalition also. I passed out the pictures;
18 that's what my bathroom looks like and this is going
19 on two years. I have no stove, my oven is not
20 workin' and I put in the tickets; I have ticket
21 numbers and they do [bell] the same thing; they have
22 people come out and verify that the thing needs to be
23 done, but nobody comes back and finishes the work.
24 That's all I have to say.
25

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: No, I... thank you for your testimony; I would want you to take these pictures and I want you to go Mr. Laboy, who handles repairs throughout the Public Housing Authority, because these are trouble, so. And then you can follow up with the Committee. So we're gonna add one more person. Can you please identify yourself?

EVANGELINE BYERS: My name is Evangeline Byers [phonetic] and I live at 2832 West 23rd Street and for about six years I have been tryin' to get my bathroom fixed; I was even on [off mic] not too long ago; they came out, I pointed the hole in the wall, they fixed it; they told me the roof was fixed; the roof was [off mic] over, but it [off mic] can see everything [off mic] that the water started coming down; the smell is terrible. I have pictures here, I have pictures from Reyes when he was in office and I have all of this... even Stella tried to help me. I was at... I was at Metro Tech, the roundtable meeting; everybody was in my apartment the next day; here's the order and everything; nothin' has been done and every time I turn around I'm talking to them, I'm pleading with them about my apartment. They wanna come and plaster everything, so the next few days

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2 it's gonna fall back in; I won't let 'em do it; I say
3 you find the leak and then you come to me. The roof
4 is the culprit, it's the roof and I told Ron that... so
5 he said that he fixed the roof. I said, no you
6 didn't. He said yes I did. I said soon as the roof
7 unthaw my apartment's gonna be soakin' wet, soakin'
8 wet, stinkin' mold, everything [off mic] and here's
9 pictures here; these are some of the pictures I have
10 right here, of my bathroom, bedroom, closet; I even
11 took this picture, the towels on the floor in the
12 bathroom and my bedroom; they were [off mic] water
13 [bell] that I pulled them up, put two sets of my
14 towels down to bring it even with the floor so it
15 would look good. Ever since I've been in public
16 housing it has been a nightmare; everything I had to
17 do myself. They gave me faulty... a roach-infested
18 refrigerator, roach-infested stove; I went to P.C.
19 Richard and bought everything myself. I went to Home
20 Depot; I pulled all the hinges off, soaked them for
21 three days to get the roach eggs; took... sand
22 everything down, sand everything down and redid my
23 cabinets again... [crosstalk]

24 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So in the interest...
25 in...

EVANGELINE BYERS: I don't have the same cabinets, I have... [interpose]

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: You need to...

EVANGELINE BYERS: green and white cabinets.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: In the interest of time... if anyone has repair issues, you can feel free to speak to Mark, Carlos and me and we would be more than happy to follow up with New York City Housing Authority on it, but I do wanna remain on topic; the subject is temporary boilers, but we'd be more than willing to assist any tenant with issues, so.

[background comments]

EVANGELINE BYERS: And I'm on my way to Housing Authority [background comments].

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So again, I will... I... Okay. So I wanna thank all of you for taking time out of your lives to participate in this event and I wanna thank Council Member Menchaca and Council Member Treyger for really putting this issue on the radar of the Public Housing Committee and you can trust that we will keep an eye on it. So thank you so much. [applause] [background comments] This hearing is adjourned.

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[gavel]

[background comments]

C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date March 26, 2014