

**Testimony of Lindsay Greene, Senior Advisor to the Deputy Mayor for Housing & Economic Development before
the
New York City Council Committee on Consumer Affairs**

**Hearing on Intro. No. 1648
Establishing a Nightlife Task Force and an Office of Nightlife**

June 19, 2017

Introduction

Good morning, [Speaker], Chairman Espinal, and members of the Committee on Consumer Affairs. I am Lindsay Greene, Senior Advisor to the Deputy Mayor for Housing & Economic Development. I work closely with several agencies that are involved with economic development, public space and business opportunity, including the Department of Consumer Affairs (“DCA”), the Department of Small Business Services (“SBS”) and the New York City Economic Development Corporation (“EDC”) among others. I am joined today by several colleagues from various city agencies that touch the nightlife and entertainment industries, including Shira Gans (Senior Director of Policy + Programs at the Mayor’s Office of Media & Entertainment), Tamala Boyd (General Counsel at the Department of Consumer Affairs), and Kristin Sakoda (Deputy Commissioner and General Counsel at the Department of Cultural Affairs). Shira and I will be giving testimony on the Nightlife bill, and Tamala and Kristin are joining us for Q&A. We are pleased to be representing Mayor Bill de Blasio’s administration here today.

First, Chairman Espinal, I want to thank you again for the work you have already been doing with us on nightlife issues broadly.

Second, let me echo Shira’s statements that this Administration feels strongly that nightlife is essential to the New York City economy and culture and we want to help the industry flourish and ensure all New Yorkers are safe and secure while they are enjoying the diversity of the City’s entertainment and nightlife offerings. We are excited to work with you in reviewing these nightlife issues, and to discussing the specifics of your bill and our recent announcement of a Nightlife Ambassador in the Mayor’s jobs plan “New York Works” which was released last Thursday.

Briefly, I want to speak about the Cabaret Law, which may come up in this hearing in the context of current regulations that touch nightlife and any questions about enforcement that may be happening currently.

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As you know The Department of Consumer Affairs has been issuing licenses under the cabaret law, which was first enacted back in 1926. As you are also aware, the City of New York is in active proceedings regarding a challenge to the City's Cabaret law. As such, unfortunately we are unable to comment today on aspects of the Cabaret Law relevant to that litigation.

As it relates to enforcement of the current cabaret law, it is important to note that:

- The enforcement of cabaret licenses is not the primary mission of the New York City Police Department.
- It is our understanding that NYPD has enforced this Law under this Administration, however it has been infrequent.
- We are aware of historical issues with the law's enforcement and we want to be very clear that this administration has NOT taken those controversial approaches to the cabaret law under Mayor de Blasio.

Furthermore, I would like to point out that the cabaret law is an old law and the Administration is having a number of very active discussions amongst all the relevant agencies regarding the cabaret law. These discussions, however, are very ongoing and given the pending lawsuit, we cannot comment on specifics of those discussions.

Again, I want to echo that the de Blasio Administration firmly believes in the importance of nightlife and entertainment to the City's economy, culture and identity, and we look forward to working with you on our plans for helping the industry flourish and expand in a safe and responsible way.

Thank you for inviting us to testify on this nightlife bill. We'll now welcome your questions.

Thank you.