

**Testimony of Steven Ettannani  
New York City Department of Consumer Affairs**

**Before the  
Committee on Civil and Human Rights**

**Hearing on  
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Good morning Chair Eugene and Members of the Committee on Civil and Human Rights. I am Steven Ettannani, Executive Director for External Affairs at the New York City Department of Consumer and Worker Protection (DCWP). I would like to thank the Committee for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of DCWP Commissioner Lorelei Salas in support of the expansion of the City Human Rights Law to cover domestic workers.

The City Council, through Local Law 98 of 2016, created the Paid Care Division. It is housed within DCWP's Office of Labor Policy and Standards, led by a Division head and the Paid Care Advocate. The Division is charged with coordinating with stakeholders and workers to protect and raise job standards in the paid care industry – including for domestic workers, home care workers, housecleaners, and others.

Primarily women of color and immigrants, paid care workers play an essential role in New York City's economy caring for our loved ones. However, these workers face inherent challenges in exercising their rights in their workplace. They frequently work out of public view - alone in private homes - isolated from their peers. To address these challenges, DCWP works strategically and collaboratively with trusted partners to reach workers and ensure they know and have the tools to realize their protections. Many of those partners are here today with us in this Committee room.

Over the past six months alone, our staff has interacted with over two thousand paid care workers at more than 50 events. We've met paid care workers at playgrounds, at events hosted by community- and faith-based partners, and even at industry trainings that were mandated by

DCWP's consent orders with agencies employing home health aides, and that required those agencies to provide their workers resources about legal protections. Most recently, DCWP and the National Domestic Workers Alliance co-hosted an "open house" for paid care workers to provide them with an overview of their rights and resources and gathered a working group of stakeholders, including our colleagues at CCHR, to further strategize on engagement and policy advocacy going forward.

DCWP's collaboration with partners, including the paid care working group, helped inform model standards for the paid care industry that were published in DCWP's 2018 report, *Lifting Up Paid Care Work*. The standards were intentionally aspirational but, just two years later, one of them, "protection from discrimination and harassment," could be realized by the intent of the legislation before us today. In this context, expanding the City's Human Rights Law to include domestic workers, would mark another important milestone in the movement to raise standards in the industry.

At DCWP, we are committed to supporting the power of domestic workers and the momentum they have created for a cultural shift that recognizes their vital importance to the daily functioning of the City and its economy. For this reason, we have sought to expand our own protections for paid care workers through Intro. 800, which would allow all domestic workers to accrue their Paid Safe and Sick Leave and Paid Personal Time based on the number of hours they work and begin using their time 90 days after starting work with an employer, giving them parity with other workers in the City.

DCWP looks forward to our continued collaboration with partners and the Council as we work to make these protections a reality for domestic workers and help ensure that paid care workers know about their rights and how to enforce them.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

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