

Testimony provided Government Operations Committee of the New York City Council
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Walter Stafford, Professor Robert F. Wagner, NYU
Diana Salas, Women of Color Policy Network

Thank you for inviting us to testify on the status of Black employment in New York City government. We have been studying these issues and problems since the 1980's when we released **Racial, Ethnic and Gender Segmentation in New York City Governments** (Community Service Society, 1989). At the time a number of groups were concerned about the unwillingness of Mayoral agencies to hire, promote, and diversify Blacks, Latinos and women. There was a concern that: African Americans, Latinos and white women were concentrated at the lower end of the income spectrum within agencies and were largely confined to employment in agencies paying the lowest salaries. The majority of white men in city government worked in high-wage agencies despite their declining share of the workforce, and they retained a disproportionate share of the high wage jobs. New York City had avoided developing a strong and viable public sector affirmative action plan despite warning from the federal government in 1977 that they were not meeting federal standards.

The great tragedy of today's hearings is that we are repeating a similar story with the notable exception that white women have largely moved out of the lower-paying ranks of mayoral agencies. Our calculations for the most recent data obtained from the Citywide Equal Employment Database System (CEEDS) and published in the annual reports of Equal Employment Practices Commission (EEOC) reveal remarkably similar patterns to the findings fifteen years ago. In consonance with the study by Blacks in Government (BIG), we will focus on administrative and managerial employment. However, we wish to make clear that these problems extend to Black employees on all levels.

The most pronounced observation is that despite the fact that groups of color are the majority of the city's population, whites continue to constitute more than six out of every ten administrative and managerial positions in mayoral agencies. In 2002, whites held 61 percent of these jobs, Blacks 23 percent, Hispanics 8 percent and Asians 7 percent. Whites and Asians were the only groups with higher proportions of administrators and managers than their share of the workforce. Whites were 42 percent of the city workforce but 61 percent of the top managers, and Asians were 4 percent of the workforce and 7 percent of the top-level employees. Despite Blacks' increased share of administrative and managerial positions, their share of these jobs remained far below their workforce share. In 2002, Blacks were 36 percent of the workforce but as noted previously only 23 percent of the top-level administrators. Comparable percentages for Hispanics were eight and 16 percent (Show Tables)

Greater details about the patterns illuminate the disparities. The white share of administrators and managers exceeded their share of the workforce in 39 of the 43 agencies that we examined. These patterns are notable in the Mayor's Office, Fire and Police Departments, Department of City Planning, Environmental Protection, and the Department of Transportation, among others. However, it was also true in Youth and Community Development, where one might expect administrators to mirror the client population. In contrast to the patterns for whites, the Black share of administrators and managers exceeded their share of the workforce in only six agencies. These agencies included the Departments of Homeless Service, Juvenile Justice, Social Services,

Corrections, Employment, and Administration for Children's Services, and accounted for about half of all the administrative and managerial jobs available to Blacks. This high concentration—segmentation—of Blacks, distinctly contrasts with the accessibility of whites to top jobs in every governmental sphere (Show Tables).

The continued segmentation of Blacks and Hispanics in a narrow range of agencies limits their opportunities for mobility; depresses their wages, denies them opportunities for exploring a wider array of government activities, sends a message to their populations, especially to their youth that their career paths must remain traditional and limited, and denies the city the benefits of racially and culturally competent administrators capable of dealing with a dominant population of groups of color. Ironically, if not sadly, our recommendations today echo those of the 1980s. First, the Mayoral agencies must have a strong affirmative action plan and heed the recommendations of the Equal Employment Practices Commission. The Mayor has to be held responsible for these recommendations. The Council also needs to provide additional funding to EEPC so that it can increase its audits of agencies. Second, The Council must institutionalize a monitoring of agencies into its deliberations. Agencies with severe under representation of Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians, must be given a time line for correcting the disparities. As a rule, the Council must demand that each agency indicate the racial and gender composition of its top administrators during the budget process or face penalties.