

TESTIMONY OF THE NEW YORK IMMIGRATION COALITION**Int. 1482**

Good Morning, thank you Public Safety Committee Chairperson Vanessa Gibson and Council Member Garodnick for allowing the New York Immigration Coalition (NYIC) to testify today on the POST Act (Int. 1482). My name is Muzna Ansari and I am the Immigration Policy Manager of the NYIC.

The NYIC is an umbrella policy and advocacy organization that represents over 150 non-profit members serving immigrants throughout New York State. For the last 30 years, the NYIC has engaged in advocacy at the city, state, and federal levels to protect immigrant communities. Due to the enforcement implications of surveillance and information sharing, the NYIC strongly supports passage of the Public Oversight of Surveillance Technology (POST) Act.

Thank you to the Council for introducing this important piece of legislation that will help ensure transparency and increase accountability of the NYPD. Given the Federal administration's unwavering attack on immigrant communities, it is vital now more than ever that the public be aware of what information the New York Police Department collects and subsequently shares with federal agencies. It is also critical in this political climate for the public to know *which* specific agencies this information is shared with.

Given the recent uptick in immigrant enforcement, immigrant communities are living in fear right now. In the eyes of undocumented immigrants, any interaction with local law enforcement can lead to significant ramifications. There are rampant rumors in the community of enforcement occurring as a result of interaction with various government agencies, particularly the NYPD. Immigrants are thus far less likely to trust law enforcement and far less likely to report crime or cooperate in the investigation and prosecution of criminal activity. Given the NYPD's history of surveillance of the Muslim community, there is also deep distrust amongst Muslim New Yorkers of local law enforcement.

At this critical time, it is vital that the public know what kinds of data the NYPD collects and disseminates, and with whom that information is shared. Currently, the NYPD faces no incentive or city requirement to withhold information from federal agencies, as surveillance technologies employed by the NYPD are often funded by federal grants or private donors. As a result, surveillance information sharing is currently inadequately monitored. Currently, New Yorkers do not know if, for example, the NYPD shares information gathered through surveillance with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).