



## THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

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# ***CITING ‘DISRESPECT’ FOR COMMUNITIES, CM CHIN GRILLS ADMIN TO STEP UP OVERSIGHT OF FILM SHOOTS IN RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS***

**CITY HALL** – Today, the New York City Council’s Committees on Technology and Small Business Services held a heated hearing on the film industry’s impact on the city. Citing the disproportionately high number of film shoots in Lower Manhattan, Council Member Margaret S. Chin grilled officials from the Mayor’s Office of Media and Entertainment (MOME)—including new Commissioner Anne del Castillo—about the lack of City oversight of the film industry.



“Lower Manhattan residents are proud when they see their neighborhoods showcased in movies and TV shows, but that does not mean my constituents need to tolerate bullying from production staffers, unsafe streets and unannounced film shoots on their narrow residential blocks,” said Council Member Chin. “It is time for MOME to provide stronger oversight of the impacts of film productions and a demonstrated commitment to prioritizing sensitivity and, most importantly, respect for our neighborhoods. Without more accountability, the chronic disruptions and quality of life burdens stemming from these large-scale productions will continue to rest on the shoulders of regular New Yorkers—that is unacceptable. We need balance, and more efforts to make this a positive experience for everyone, including pedestrians and small businesses.”

During the hearing, Council Member Chin recounted an instance a production staffer joked that they were Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) while filming on the corner of Mott and Pell Streets in Chinatown. In response, MOME was forced to issue a sensitivity training to the individual.

To improve accountability, the Council Member urged MOME to reform its Code of Conduct and enhance language capacity to better communicate with residents in immigrant communities, provide relief to residential blocks like Reade Street that have been used as a film shooting location and staging area multiple times in a year, create enforcement mechanisms to prevent bullying from production staff, incentivize production crews to shop local and give back to local organizations, and establish a plan to prioritize safety and accessibility for pedestrians.

The Committees also examined a series of bills aimed at further regulating the film industry, including:

- [Intro 1495](#): Creates a local community and media bill of rights
- [Intro 0158](#): Mandates that the application fee for those seeking permits to film or photograph on City property be high enough to cover the costs to the City of reviewing and processing the application
- [Intro 0937](#): Requires film companies to give a 72-hour notice when shooting will disrupt traffic
- [Intro 1515](#): Creates a task force to comprehensively study the impacts and benefits of the film industry
- [Intro 1700](#): Requires those applying for a film, television production or photography permit to file their application no less than 14 days prior to the date of shooting
- [Intro 1722](#): Requires certain applicants for film and television production permits to pay a \$800 fee to cover the costs to the City of providing the permit

Over the past two decades, the film industry has exploded across New York City. According to a report commissioned by MOME, the number of television shows shot in the city quadrupled from 2002 to 2014. In 2012, 162 films were shot in the city. By 2018, that number jumped to 330. While the industry impacts the entire city, data from MOME indicates that zip codes located in Lower Manhattan are among the most desired – and frequently used – areas.

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