

# THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK



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## ***CM CHIN RALLIES ADVOCATES, SENIORS AHEAD OF BLOCKBUSTER HEARING ON HISTORIC EFFORT TO TACKLE AGEISM IN NYC'S WORKPLACES***

**City Hall** - Today Council Member Margaret S. Chin stood alongside age justice advocates, older working New Yorkers, and fellow Council Members ahead of a landmark New York City Council hearing on a historic package of legislation tackling age discrimination in the workforce.

“For too long, older New Yorkers have lacked the protections so many others enjoy in our city’s workplaces. We need to push for systemic reforms so that no one feels like there's an age limit to making a livelihood for themselves,” said **Council Member Chin, Chair of the Committee on Aging**. “Our new package of legislation will move us closer to building a city, and economy, that is truly fair for all ages. I want to thank all of my fellow New Yorkers who came out today to end the culture of silence and shame around ageism.”



With older workers becoming a larger part of the workforce, the New York City's Commission on Human Rights last year received 193 age-related inquiries, 119 of which pertained to discrimination in employment. Over the summer, ageism made headlines when several NY1 anchorwomen filed a lawsuit against Charter-Spectrum alleging gender and age discrimination. Three of the female journalists leading the lawsuit, Amanda Farinacci, Vivian Lee and Marisol Seda, testified at today's hearing.

The legislation introduced last month by Council Members Chin and Diana Ayala forces the City to employ new tools to test for cases of age discrimination, start an age discrimination task force, create a citywide office dedicated to resources for workforce development and advocacy for older adults, and expand outreach, awareness and training.

"I am proud to be partnering with Council Member Chin to introduce legislation that will help combat age discrimination in the workplace," said **Council Member Diana Ayala**. "Age discrimination, which disproportionately impacts women, can take a negative toll on a person's emotional, social, and mental wellbeing. As lawmakers in a city with a growing aging population, it is imperative we take bold, concrete steps to address this issue."

"I want to commend Council Members Margaret Chin and Diane Ayala on their legislation to address age discrimination in the workforce," said **Council Member Mathieu Eugene, Chair of the Committee on Civil and Human Rights**. "There are many hardworking New Yorkers who may fear losing their jobs or are discouraged from seeking new careers because of their age. As a city, we must do more to protect the rights of an aging workforce and provide resources to help them succeed. It is my hope that by working together, we can expand the opportunities afforded to older New Yorkers who are contributing to the strength of our economy."

"From personal stories to public lawsuits, we know that age discrimination is all-too-common among many employers, with detrimental effects on the careers and financial well-being of older New Yorkers," said **Council Member Debi Rose, Member of the Committee on Aging**. "There is no place for ageism in the workplace, and we must work to combat it, as we have worked to combat other forms of discrimination. I thank my colleague Council Member Margaret Chin for shining a light on this problem and introducing a historic package of legislation aimed at identifying and eliminating age discrimination from New York City workplaces."

“New York City does not tolerate any form of discrimination. As the workforce population of aging adults increases, we must step-up enforcement efforts and employment protections to safeguard older workers. We need to ensure that employers are following the law and educate workers on their rights in the fight against ageism,” said **Council Member Mark Treyger, Member of the Committee on Aging**.

"Every New Yorker deserves protection against discrimination," said **Council Member Ben Kallos**. "This package of legislation delivers protections that older adults really need in a 21st-century economy. We all have working seniors in our lives who would benefit from this legislation, and if we're lucky one day we will also reach an age where these protections will benefit us too. Thank you to Council Member Chin for her leadership on this issue. I look forward to seeing this legislation become law."

“Together with Council Member Chin I recently led a hearing which investigated the tragedy of the large and growing number of older women aging into poverty,” said **Council Member Helen Rosenthal, Chair of the Committee on Women & Gender Equity**. “One of the underlying reasons for this trend is the discrimination and prejudice that older New Yorkers face when trying to find employment. Discrimination based on age is discrimination plain and simple. I am proud to join Council Member Chin in pushing forward legislation that will help to ensure that every New Yorker has equal access to employment opportunities – which is fundamental to economic security.”

“Ageism does not belong in any workplace, and I am proud to join Council Members Chin and Ayala in co-sponsoring this legislative package,” said **Council Member Carlina Rivera**. “As Co-Chair of the Council’s Women’s Caucus, I also believe this legislation will in particular help the countless women who suffer from age-based discrimination and are forced out of their jobs in their 50s and 60s unfairly and in discriminatory fashion. It’s wrong, and it must end.”

“Our city is experiencing a shift as more New Yorkers are choosing to stand up and call out discrimination in the workplace,” said **Council Member Farah N. Louis**. “I am proud to co-sponsor this legislative package that aims to mitigate the effects of discrimination and ensures that workplace culture promotes equity for all.”

Age discrimination often means more than the loss of a job—it has severe health and social consequences as well. A study by the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) revealed that negative age stereotypes can increase the chances of Alzheimer’s, depression and anxiety. In 2018, a team of researchers at the Yale University School of Public Health found that the total health costs caused by ageism in the US were in excess of \$62 billion.

“Time and again, Council Member Chin is a champion for older New Yorkers,” said **Beth Finkel, State Director of AARP NY**. “AARP New York applauds the Councilmember for introducing a package of legislation to fight age discrimination in the workplace. With the average age of a New York City worker being close to 50 years old, this legislation sends the message that NYC values and respects older workers and that there is no place for age discrimination in the workplace. We look forward to these measures being passed by the full City Council and signed into law by the Mayor.”

"SAGE commends Council Member Chin's dedication to improving the lives of older New Yorkers with the introduction of this bill," said **Michael Adams, SAGE CEO**. "At SAGE, we know that the effects of age-based discrimination in the workforce are profound and often are compounded by other forms of discrimination, including discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Eliminating age discrimination is not just a matter of fairness in the workplace, but it is essential in ensuring that all older people, including LGBT elders, are able to achieve the financial security they deserve."

"With New Yorkers over the age of 50 making up the fastest-growing sector of the city's population, the time for age justice has come," said **Bobbie Sackman, Workplace Justice Coordinator, Radical Age Movement**. “Yet, age discrimination in the workplace is rampant leaving thousands of older New Yorkers living in economic and social crisis. Thousands of women leave the workforce to provide caregiving for elderly parents and others only to find themselves unable to re-enter the workforce leaving them on the fiscal cliff. Older New Yorkers are part of the future, too.”

“Once again, Councilmember Chin is providing leadership, this time on a subject few have been willing to address,” **Paul Nagle, Executive Director, Stonewall Community Development Corp**. “With Baby Boomers aging in and living longer – age discrimination in the workplace is becoming a major challenge for older adults.”

“Ageism is pushing too many New Yorkers out of their workplaces in their 50s and 60s, much sooner than they need or want to,” **Christian Gonzalez, Director of Strategic Policy Initiatives, Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging**. “This package of bills is a great contribution towards protecting the economic security of New Yorkers as they grow older.”

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