

Good afternoon, I am Josh Gold, political director at New York's Hotel & Motel Trades Council.

I wanted to thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Many of my colleagues will testify today about the proposed rules impact on issue advocacy, the burdensome nature of the rules, as well as legal concerns. I wanted to focus on member-to-member communications, but I am well versed and happy to answer questions on any of the rules' practical implications for organizations like mine.

Let me first stress that HTC strongly supports the idea that those who seek to independently influence the general public's voting decisions disclose who they are, their funding and spending.

However, members of organizations are not the general public, they know why their organization is trying to influence their decision and they know where the funding is coming from.

As a policy matter, the Board should be doing everything in its power to counter the lack of participation in the electoral process. Various studies (Blydenburg, 1971; Cutright, 1963; Gerber and Green 2000; Gosnell, 1924; Kramer 1970; Nagel 1987) show that political mobilization efforts have a direct impact on participation levels. Regulating those internal mobilization efforts will discourage them. Thereby decreasing participation.

Setting aside that it is bad policy to discourage participation, regulating member-to-member communications was simply not the intent of NYC voters. Member-to-

member communication was not even mentioned in the charter revision commission's report.

While the Board's staff has relied on LA's disclosure requirements as a comparison point for proposing member communication disclosure, it is important to remember that LA's municipal code differentiates between Member communications and Independent expenditures. The code clearly states that the drafter's intent was to regulate two distinct classes of communications: IE's and member communications. In fact, if you go to the disclosure website, you will see two separate columns, one for member-to-member communications and a separate column for independent expenditures.

If the charter revision commission intended to capture member communications it would have clearly stated so, as the drafters of LA's code did.

To summarize:

The people of the City of New York never intended to Regulate member communications. In fact, regulating such communication with burdensome reporting requirements would further stifle voter participation in a City already suffering from anemic voter turnout and civic engagement.