

**Subject: Labor Leaders of Yesterday Respond to the MLC**

September 7, 2023

Dear Speaker Adams and City Council Members,

On August 24<sup>th</sup>, the MLC leadership used the AFL-CIO, Central Labor Council (CLC) and the Vice Presidents of the CLC, none of whom are covered by the Taylor Law, NYC Collective bargaining or Intro 1099 if passed, in an attempt to intimidate the Council with an appearance of support of their false argument that Councilman Barron's [Intro 1099](#) is illegal. The truth is, it was a bully tactic with no substance.

Labor leaders were always aware of the need to protect retiree health benefits and it was sacrosanct, never to be touched because retirees are not allowed to bargain, nor are they in unions any longer to enjoy the protection they once provided. Gary Altman wrote an Op-Ed in the NY Daily News reminding the Council of its history in championing protection for retirees since he was the Counsel to the Council and handled the last amendment to Admin Code 12-126 in 2001 when the Mayor was using the same ill-informed arguments. It wasn't illegal then, and it isn't now. Threats were made that it would be challenged and it never was. Pass Intro 1099 and let it be challenged. The rightful judgment should come from the Court like the Council compelled retirees to do.

In response to the MLC Letter, former NYC Labor Leaders who knew that the arguments put forth by the MLC were false, contacted us to lend their support. Not only did THEY run their unions, and collective bargaining, they were also on the MLC and many served in the Central Labor Council for years and some for decades. You might recognize some of these leaders. They were some of the most powerful union leaders of their time and ran this City through some of its toughest days. They want you to know that Intro 1099 does not threaten their former unions' bargaining ability, and would fulfill the promise made to them by those very same unions and the City of NY. We are labor, we are union, and we lived the tradition of supporting the tenets of organized labor protecting our active members and their retirement benefits as we identified we would one day be retired.

Please pass Intro 1099, and we again ask for a hearing. Sunshine and facts are needed on the record to ensure this never happens again to a Retiree or Council. Absent legislation, the City will continue to diminish the benefits of retirees.

Respectfully and In TRUE Solidarity,

Marianne Pizzitola

President